

VIEWS & NEWS



Residents walk to remember and support CANSA

On Monday 14 April, 57 enthusiastic Ambers residents and several four-legged walkers met at Amber Lakes for a walk in support of the Cancer Association of South Africa. Pink clothing was worn to represent breast cancer and blue was for colon or prostate cancer.

Jessica Gird, CANSA sustainability coordinator, welcomed participants before they lit remembrance candles and a minute of silence for prayers was observed. The

walkers then headed out on their chosen route distances.

Yellow ribbon route markers indicated a 360 metre walk; blue 1,47 km; purple 2,7 km and pink 5,8 km.

Ambers management closed the office to support the cause and Niki, Susan, Jack, Shamentha, Patricia, Precious, Mpume, Zandile, Aggie, Ally, Thoko and Wayne walked along with residents – well done!

The walkers enjoyed the chatting and comradeship along the routes which continued afterwards at the Lakes Tea Room over a welcoming cup of tea or coffee.

Well done, Ambers, for organising this event and thank you for the support from “get-up-and-go-able” residents.

Sue Grills



TOP LEFT AND RIGHT: Remembrance candles were lit before participants in the event took off on their routes.

MIDDLE: Jessica Gird from CANSA (right) welcomed the walkers.

BELOW: There was no lack of canine support at the event.

Pictures: Sue Grills

SOUTH GATE GETS AN UPGRADE

Out with the old and in with the new, a familiar Amber scenario!

The old green garden shed, trellis and porta-loo are history and the new guard house is in. And if you wonder how you missed it being built, the answer is in the picture. It arrived as a ready-made unit.

The upgrade of South Gate in Amber Valley has not been a simple exercise. All sorts of permissions were required as it is situated near a wetland, which had environmental implications. But, with patience and perseverance, all the necessary conditions were met, the foundation bases were cast and the whole site was prepared for the delivery. The weather was the only variable and, in true form for this summer, it rained on the day.

Now the new and very smart guard house is in place. The water, electricity and sewerage are being connected and soon the guard will be the envy of all. All he will need then is a fridge to keep fresh all the food that the residents give him.

Well done Amber Valley – another fine upgrade.



ABOVE: The brand new guard house being delivered.

Picture: Ali Reynolds

Meyrick Bowker

Watch these plants



These interesting plants are growing at 14 Plane Avenue in Amber Valley. They are one of the many varieties of Agave and may even be a hybridised ornamental garden agave. The genus name Agave is derived from the Greek word *agauos*, meaning “admirable”, referring to the very tall inflorescences produced by most species of Agave.

Agaves are monocarpic plants. This means that the plant will flower and produce seeds only once in its lifetime and then die. Bad news for the owners.

Some agave plants reproduce asexually by producing bulbils on their flower stalk. These bulbils are small, vegetative bulbs that fall off to form new plants. This is a common method for agave propagation, allowing them to create clones of the parent plant.

However the plants in Plane Avenue seem to be reproducing asexually and sexually. The one in the background on the left of the picture (left) is producing bulbils (shown in the picture above) and the two in the foreground look at this stage that they will flower. Time will tell. Time will also tell if the plants are now doomed to die.

Text and pictures: Meyrick Bowker



Keep it clean, please

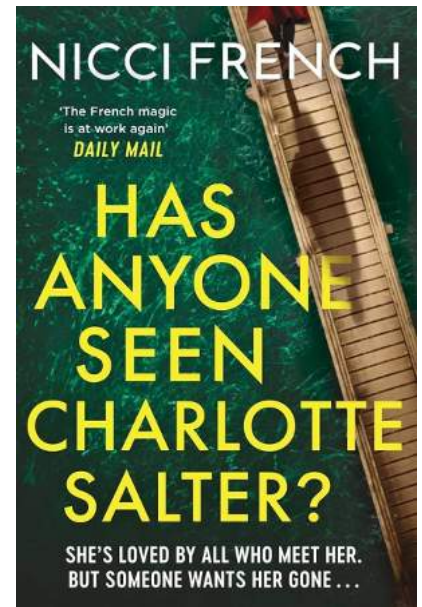
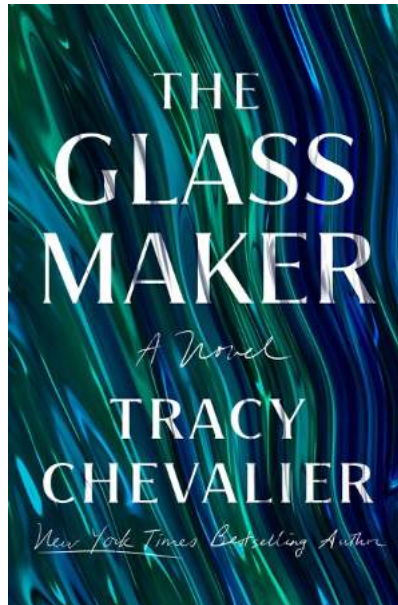
We gratefully accept donations into the library. Most of our stock has been donated. In March we had 230 fiction donations, of which 78 were shelved. However, please ensure that what you want to donate is suitable for the library. We do not accept dirty books or those in a poor condition or those that are so old that they are outdated. Our facility is not a repository for discarded books; it is an active, functioning lending library.

The Glassmaker by Tracy Chevalier (2024) tells the story of the timeless craft of glassmaking, particularly bead-making, and it focuses on Orsola Rosso, her work and her relationships. This is a rich, transporting story that follows a family of glassmakers from the height of Renaissance-era Italy to the present day. The novel starts in 1486 when Venice is a wealthy centre for trade. Orsola Rosso is the eldest daughter in a family of glassblowers on Murano, the island revered for the craft. As a woman she is not meant to work with glass, but she has a vision. When her father dies, she teaches herself to make glass beads in secret and her work supports the Rosso family. The story skips in time but maintains the Rosso family and their acquaintances as protagonists passing time at a much slower pace. Sometimes this time warp is a little disconcerting. We follow Orsola and her family as they live through creative triumph and heartbreaking loss, from a plague devastating Venice to continental soldiers stripping its palazzos bare. It follows Murano and its maestros to the transformation of the city of trade into a city of tourists. In every era, the Rosso women ensure that their work and their families' ties endure, making this book a mesmerising portrait of a woman, a family and a city as everlasting as their glass.

Has Anyone Seen Charlotte Salter? by Nicci French (2024) is mystery writing at its best. On the day of Alec Salter's 50th birthday party, his wife, Charlotte, vanishes. Most of the small English village of Glensted is at the party for hours before anyone realises she is missing. While Alec shrugs off her disappearance, their four children grow increasingly anxious as the winter hours become days, and she doesn't return. Then, two days later, Etty and her friend Greg find the body of Greg's father, also the Salters' friend and neighbour, Duncan Ackerley. The police conclude that Duncan and Charlotte were having an affair before he killed her and committed suicide. Thirty years later, Morgan Ackerley returns to Glensted with his brother Greg to make a podcast based on this shared tragedy. Alec Salter has dementia and is entering a care home while his children put his affairs in order. The Ackerleys ask to interview the Salters, and the entire town is brought into the unresolved cases. Allegations fly, secrets come to light, and a fire results in a murder. When the podcast makes national news, London sends Detective Inspector Maud O'Connor to Glensted to take over the investigation. She strives to uncover the truth as a new picture of what really happened to Charlotte Salter and Duncan Ackerley emerges.

Happy reading.

Rowena Wilkinson



LOCAL SIGHT



Water everywhere

Above average rainfall this summer has resulted in a dramatic increase in the volume of water flowing over the Howick Falls on the uMngeni River. This picture, capturing a rainbow and the water vapour rising from the falls early in the morning, was taken by Di Scher from her home in Amber Ridge.

EVENT

EASTER BONNETS HELP RAISE FUNDS



Derek Warren (above), seen with Barbara Mulford, wears the best man's hat and the prize for the best lady's hat was won by Kathy Fry (right).

Residents had fun decorating their tables (below).

Pictures: Sally Pearson



An event to raise funds for the Democratic Alliance party for the upcoming 2026 municipal election was held in the Amber Valley restaurant on Saturday 12 April. It was the brainchild of Sharon Pigott of Amber Ridge who is a member of Ward 5.

She was ably assisted by a group of DA supporters from Ward 5 who hosted 20 tables (160 people). Tables were decorated in an Easter theme and guests were invited to wear Easter hats. Prizes were awarded for the best table and best hats for men and ladies. Ann Peacock won for best table, Derek Warren for the best hat worn by a man and Kathy Fry for the best lady's hat. To help with the fundraising, five beautiful quilts were raffled by Claude and Elise Hulley.

Councillor Hazel Lake was MC with addresses given by the uMngeni Deputy Mayor, Sandile Mnikathi, and member of the provincial legislature, Tammy Colley.

Sally Pearson

AMBER AMBIT

Easter delight

Generous Amber residents donated over 700 Easter eggs to God's Little Lambs, Funda Nenja, Khazimula, Lidgetton Feeding Scheme and Caritas.

A grateful thank you from the Amber Ambit.

Yvonne Spain



MUSICAL MOVIES



Video to follow up presentation

Following quite a bit of interest about the music played in The Ambers Drama Group's "Easter Voices" Presentation in the Auditorium in April, I have compiled a 50 minute movie of video recordings of the same music.

The musical movie is an add-on to "Easter Voices" and includes an interview with composer Sir Karl Jenkins.

Performing pieces from Jenkins' works *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace* and *Symphonic Adiemus* are, among others, the Metamorphose String Orchestra, the San Juan Bautista Choir, the Mechelen Chamber Orchestra, Visszhang Choir and Orchestra and the Orchestra and Choir of the Salzburg Philharmonic. Also featured is Croatian cellist, Stjepan Hauser known professionally as HAUSER, playing with the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir Zvezdice. There are two bonus tracks as well.

The movie will be shown at the next Monday Musical Movies evening on 5 May, starting at 19h00. Please note the venue might change from the Amber Valley Clubhouse to the Auditorium, depending on whether the renovations to the clubhouse start at the beginning of May as planned. A notice will be sent out on d6 confirming the venue.

Robin Davis

REFLECTION

Definition of "hospital"

The late Pope Francis always surprised with his reflections:

"The walls of hospitals have heard more honest prayers than churches ... They have seen far more sincere kisses than those in airports ... It is in the hospital where you see a homophobe being saved by a gay doctor. The 'posh' doctor saving the life of a beggar ... In intensive care, you see a Jewish person caring for a racist ... A police officer and a prisoner in the same room receiving the same care ... A wealthy patient in line for a liver transplant, ready to receive the organ of a poor donor.

It is in these moments – when the hospital touches the wounds of people – that universes intersect with divine purpose, and in this communion of destinies, we realise that alone, we are nothing. People's absolute truths, most of the time, only appear at the moment of pain or the real threat of a definitive loss.

The hospital is a place where human beings remove their masks and reveal themselves in their true essence. This life will pass quickly. Don't fight with people. Don't criticise your body too much. Don't complain too much. Don't lose sleep over bills. Make sure to hug your loved ones. Don't worry too much about keeping the house spotless. Material things should be earned by each person – don't devote yourself to building an inheritance.

Keep the dogs closer. Don't save the good dishes. Use the new silverware. Don't skimp on your favorite perfume – wear it for yourself. Wear your favorite sneakers. Repeat your favorite clothes. So what? If it feels good, why not now? Why not take a break? Why not call now? Why not forgive now? You're waiting for so many things: Christmas, Friday, next year, when you have money, when love arrives, when everything is perfect ...

Listen – perfection doesn't exist. Human beings can't achieve it because we simply weren't made to be fulfilled here. This is a place for learning. So make the most of this life trial – and do it now. Respect yourself. Respect others. Follow your own path and leave the path chosen by others. Respect it: don't comment, don't judge, don't interfere.

Love more, forgive more, hug more, live more intensely! And leave the rest in the hands of the Creator."

ENTERTAINMENT

Musical evening

RUDI ENGELBRECHT
SKIPPY KUBHEKA
TANYA NICOLSON
CHARLES WEBSTER
Sat. 21st June, 2025
Doors open 6pm
Show at 7pm
Best of American
Ambers Auditorium
Tickets: buy from reception R90
BOOKINGS OPEN 28 MAY
PAUL SIMON - TOM PETTY
ALANNAH MYLES - TINA TURNER - NEIL DIAMOND
MARC COHN - CCR - DON MCCLEAN - BEACH BOYS
CYNDI LAUPER - TRACY CHAPMAN - JOHN DENVER
BILLY JOEL - CHER
SPRINGSTEEN - EAGLES
KENNY ROGERS



April 2025 winning images

*RIGHT: Monthly Competition,
Judges Choice Senior,
"Stationary Fly" by Chris Swinger.*

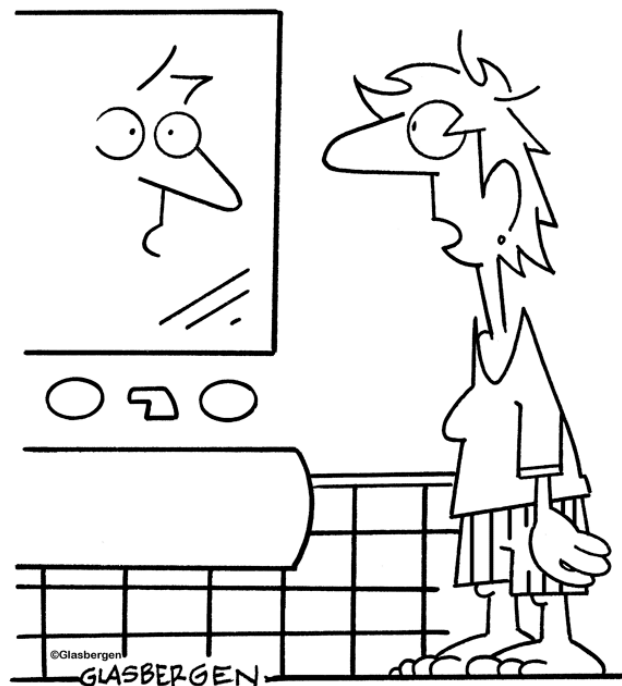
*BELOW: Set Subject "Looking Down",
Judges Choice Junior,
"Tree Climbing" by Nicole Forrester.*

*BOTTOM: Monthly Competition,
Judges Choice Junior,
"Sand Dusted Elephants" by Matt Jackson.*





"Of course I've gained weight.
That's why it's called growing older!"



"Our bodies replace millions of skin cells
every day. So how come the new ones don't
look any younger than the old ones?!"

*Where do bad rainbows go?
To prism. It's a light sentence,
but it gives them time to reflect.*

Send contributions for *Amber Views & News* to
crystelle.wilson@gmail.com
or WhatsApp 082 723 5158
by the 26th of each month.

GREATER AMBERS

IN-HOUSE FACILITATION TEAM

(The team that lives here)

Christine Francis 5491
Ed Frank 6607
Tish McDonald 5031
Gill Siedle 5355

George Smith 7063
Gwyn Sprake 5708
Ron Wilmans 5399
Marlene Wilton 7009

Sales for our greater benefit