



HOWZAT!



ROTARY CLUB OF NEWLANDS

"The club that appeals"



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30 January 2017

WEEKLY UPDATE

P O Box 44735
CLAREMONT
7735

MEETINGS: Western Province Cricket Club Sports Centre, Ave De Mist, Rondebosch, every Monday at 18h00 for 18h15 (Except for first Monday of the Month which is a Partner's Meeting, 18h30 for 19h00).

ATTENDANCE: Notice of apologies and guests and/or meal specifics to email Melinda Stapleton at mjstapleton@webafrica.org.za and copy to Bill Meyer at meypor@iafrica.com before 10h30 on Monday mornings please.

Comment

The Editor

Singular or Plural? It's Complicated

by **James Harbeck** from theweek.com

There is a myriad of ways we can express quantities in English, but there are just a couple words that are much in dispute.

Wait. Should that be "there are myriad ways" and "just a couple of words"?

Those are the two words much in dispute: *myriad* and *couple*. But we ought to just relax and let them go. They're only sliding down the same slope as many words have before them, and still more might after them: the slippery slope from noun to quantifier.

What's a quantifier? It's a kind of word not everyone knows exists. Many people — including some who write usage guides and dictionaries — think there are nouns, and there are adjectives, and everything that modifies a noun is an adjective. It's tidy, but it's not true, and it leads to some silly mistakes.

First of all, numbers aren't adjectives. They're not! We know this because they don't behave exactly like adjectives. For example, I can say "soft red pillows" and "the pillows are soft and red," but if I say "three soft red pillows," I can't say "the pillows are three, soft, and red" — and I most certainly can't say "the pillows are very three" even though I can say they are "very soft and red." Also, I can say "a pink balloon" but I can't say "a one balloon." (After all, *a* comes from *one*.)

But not all words that express quantities are numbers. Even some numbers aren't like other numbers. Consider: I can say "a thousand balloons," "a few thousand balloons," and "many thousands of balloons," but I wouldn't say "a nine balloons," "a few nine balloons," or "many nines of balloons" (unless I meant many nine-packs, in which case *nine* has become a noun standing for "nine-pack").

That's because *thousand* started out as a noun and, a long time ago, slid down the slope to becoming a quantifier. So did *hundred*. So did *dozen*. And that's the slope that *couple* and *myriad* are on right now.

When these words were nouns, they behaved like nouns, pluralizing, taking a singular verb when single, and needing an *of* to attach them to another noun. That's right: "a thousand of cattle," "two millions of pounds," "several dozens of eggs." We still sometimes use *dozen* like this when referring to cartons. These quantifiers still show the marks of their noun past: "There were a hundred cats," not "there were hundred cats" (compare "there were nine cats"); "thousands of dogs" and "scores of years" but not "fifties of dogs" or "nines of years." Quantifiers that were once nouns can still be used at least sometimes as nouns (depending in part on how far down the slope they've slid). But the rest of the time they're not behaving like nouns — but not like adjectives either.

Take *couple*. There are other nouns that mean "two": *pair* and *brace*, for instance — "I got a pair of tickets"; "I shot a brace of pheasants." But they haven't become quantifiers (except in some less dominant versions of English; you may have heard someone say "I bought a pair shoes"). According to some people, neither has *couple*. They know it as a noun and they want it to stay a noun. Some usage guides will tell you that using a *couple* without *of* is colloquial. For many people it is. But since it first started being used that way in the U.S. in the late 1800s, it has spread, following the path of *dozen* and all the others. It's regularly being used without *of* in literary fiction and even on occasion in academic journals. You can keep using a *couple of* if you want; the *of* is unlikely to disappear entirely in our lifetimes. But you may as well get used to seeing "a couple days," "a couple years," and so on.

Oh — and as to the use of a *couple* to mean "two or three or four," that's a separate matter, but you're not going to win on that one either. Imprecision is something that can come with becoming a quantifier. We tend to use other quantifiers loosely too: "I can give you a hundred reasons" may not mean one more than 99 and one less than 101; "I've been there a dozen times" could mean 13 or 11 or perhaps even eight, depending on the context and the speaker. And *myriad* can mean just "countlessly many."

Myriad is not nearly as common a word as *couple*, but it has more ways it can be used. I won't say there are *myriad* ways you can use it, or *a myriad* ways you can use it, or even *a myriad of* ways you can use it — or that there is a *myriad of* ways — but there are at least those four ways. It started as a noun, of course, meaning "group of 10,000," borrowed from Greek by way of Latin. It arrived in English in the 1500s, and by the 1600s it was already being used on occasion as a quantifier, both with and without *a*. It slipped down the slope quickly, no doubt at least in part because of its magnitude — when *many* just isn't big enough, *myriad* serves nicely. But it's stayed in use at all the stages of the slope: "a myriad of ways is," "a myriad of ways are," "a myriad ways are," "myriad ways are." Since it's been used all these ways for centuries, there's no reason not to keep using it however we want, choosing according to what works best in the context.

Along with the quantifiers that mean specific numbers (and are used sometimes exactly, sometimes approximately), there are also quite a lot of indefinite quantifiers: ones that convey a general but never exact sense of quantity — *a lot*, *a bunch*, *a good number*, *a large percentage*, and so on. They have made it to the first level of the slope, taking a plural verb, but generally haven't made it to the second level, dropping the *of*. Like other quantifiers that came from nouns, these indefinite quantifiers can still be used as nouns, too, and that confuses people sometimes.

We don't normally have trouble distinguishing between the two senses of *a lot*: "a lot of people *were* arriving, so we directed them to a lot that *was* halfway down the block." We can usually tell the

difference between "a bunch of flowers *are* on the table" (meaning there are many flowers on the table) and "a bunch of flowers *is* on the table" (meaning the flowers are tied together in a bunch).

When we come to quantifiers such as *a large number* and *a significant percentage* and *the majority*, however, some of us look at them too long and think, "These aren't adjectives, so they're nouns, and they're singular nouns, so they *have* to take a singular verb." But they don't have to; as with *a bunch*, it depends on what you're referring to. If you mean the fact of having a majority lets your group win, you say "A majority wins," but if you mean that more than 50 percent of the individuals win (for instance in a poorly run game), you say "A majority win." If you're trying to do quantitative research and your data isn't coming together, you can say "A significant percentage is hard to reach"; if you're attempting to contact people and many of them are in remote locations, you can say "A significant percentage are hard to reach" because you're referring to the people and not the number itself. And if you're expecting many guests at your costume party, you may say "A large number are coming"; if you're expecting someone dressed up as the annual national debt figure, you can say "A large number is coming."

There's a lot more that can be said about quantifiers — I haven't even talked about mass objects as opposed to count nouns ("A lot of water is pouring out of the building, and a lot of people *are* running away") — but this much is plenty to start with. The most important point is that they're not adjectives but they're not really nouns anymore either (except when being used exactly as nouns are used). While people who tell you how to use them may not make that distinction, linguists have known about it for decades. The renowned linguist Ray Jackendoff wrote a seminal paper about quantifiers in 1968, and linguists have been refining the details further ever since. And now you know a bit of it too — more than a couple things, but not a myriad.

Previous Meeting

Minutes of the Business Meeting on 23 January 2017 Scribe: Henry Campbell

Sergeant Graham L called on Pres. Chris who welcomed visitor, global exchange scholar Rami Sayed.

Peter H read the Object of Rotary and John S called for a toast to R.I. and said Grace.

Stirrer's Spoon was awarded by Pieter v A to Bill H for being the most active member on the WhatsApp Group. Bill immediately passed it on to John V for his tireless service since being a key member in the chartering of the Club. Mike W won the wine raffle.

Youth report – Vanessa R reported that the new interact club (not yet chartered) at Mathew Goniwe High were active with Santa Shoe Boxes over the year-end break. The Newlands Club would be sponsoring 8 learners to RYLA on 1st to 4th April. Several schools in Khayelitsha will be visited on the 24th, where the books that were collected at year-end will be distributed. The Committee will consider taking on a further interact club. May is RI Youth month.

Entrepreneurship (E) Development – Andy I stated that a budget tranche was paid to the Young E Pocket Money project. Transport of participants remained a problem. The Club was invited to address the Waterfront Rotary Club in early February. The False Bay Rapid Incubation Project was proceeding as planned. Andy informed that the E development at District level was amazing. It was noted that Mentorship required hard-skills in any discipline.

Club Service – Melinda S informed that the Club regalia would be stored at Richard B's premises in a designated room at a nominal rental. Members in possession of items should deliver these to the premises. Geoff S is recording the Club history in electronic format. The contents of the room will be insured. Tinus d J proposed that an inventory of the contents be kept including any temporary withdrawals.

Melinda encouraged members that are required to thank speakers, to request the speakers gift from her or the President before the meeting. Nora S offered to gift wrap all the gifts. A meeting with the Club caterers was scheduled for next week. The Club members supported another braai after a business meeting- Wybe and Tinus were called on to be the braai-ers.

Pres. Chris reported on behalf of the following portfolios;

International and Vocational- Vocational monies will be paid at an awards evening scheduled for April. We are expecting incoming Friendship Exchange groups from 3 destinations. Members are asked to advise Jenny I if they are able to host anyone from Tanzania. There are three outgoing groups planned in the District viz. Upstate New York, Sweden, Iceland and Oregon. Anyone interested should contact Jenny.

Wybe questioned whether we should not be spending less on tertiary level bursaries and more on trade type bursaries. Jenny would be asked to supply an overview of the current practice where-after the matter could be discussed.

Membership – It is planned to induct a new member on the 5th February. Details will be circulated. Two more people are in the pipeline. A Rotary e-club of Cape Town will be established. The Rotary Club of Newlands will be the sponsor.

Community Service – A committee meeting would be held next week. Discussions would include the possibility of a global grant with a Club in Germany and some sponsorship of a golf day hosted by the Valkenburg Trust. The project involving sourcing soccer equipment from England is in progress. With the slow development of the ECD project it was suggested that the budgeted funds be diverted to something else in the meantime; this was not possible as the money has been pledged. Tinus reminded the meeting that there are still books available at Langa.

Public relations – The PR value of recent publications is estimated at R600k. The Club has 279 Facebook members and 329 Twitter members. Club Runner has been updated and is available for member use. Guidance on how to use the program would probably be needed by new users.

Treasurer-The Club has approximately R2.5million in cash and equivalents. This includes about R170k Club funds. Member accounts would be sent out next week. Dotty has collected some 22000 US toward a designated project- much appreciated by the Club members!

Spots- Colin B requests all those who wish to attend the luncheon with the Oregon friendship group to get in touch with him without delay.

Richard B described how a pre-school facility for 120 kids in Prince Albert was established from scratch at a cost of R2.5 m. Funding was required to transport and host a training teacher at the facility. He informed the meeting that the funds raised for NSRI at the wines auctions totalled R490k. He is keeping in contact with about 70 wine suppliers to the auction. He is arranging a wine tasting evening for the 14th Feb. which can host 48 people. The cost would be R140/p.

Garnet C invited members to a 100 year celebration of the Rotary International Trust at the Italian Club at R290/head.

DG Ian has arranged for a container load of sorted and packed books to be supplied to the District from a source in Australia. Mike W has offered to facilitate the Customs clearance. The books would be housed at the LEAP site from where it would be distributed to District.

John W updated the Club that the expansion project at Vukani was short of R350k. The Music room project at Steenberg is progressing well with plans expected to be approved in a couple of weeks. Concept planned facility was estimated at R4.5m but plans have been amended to a facility cost estimate of R2.25m. PENBEV are changing their funding model of building facilities towards the development of entrepreneurs. The Masekhane extension project comprising two class rooms and a kitchen valued at R725k is progressing well.

Jenny H has an old TV in good working order to pass on.

Pres. Chris showed the meeting a Certificate of Appreciation for the Club's involvement with the supply of the Vrygrond Emergency Vehicle. He congratulated those celebrating a birthday during the coming week.

The meeting was closed with the collection of Happy Rands.



www.facebook.com/newlandsrotary

Stirrer's Spoon

Bill Holland / John V

[Newlands Rotary Club Runner Calendar](#)

FUTURE FIXTURES

Year Planner

Please advise the secretary promptly of any additions or changes

January 2017

Mon 30 Ordinary

February 2017

Mon 6 Partners

Mon 13 Wine Tasting

Mon 20 Ordinary

Mon 27 Business

March 2017

Mon 6 Partners

Sun 12 Cape Town Cycle Tour

Happy Anniversary

31 January
Tinus & Adrienne de Jongh

3 February
Roy & Sharon Zazeraj

Happy Birthday

5 February
Mike Walwyn

F February
Sharon Zazeraj

UMPIRES AND SCORERS

DATE	30 January	6 February	13 February	20 February
MEETING	Ordinary	Partners	Wine Tasting	Ordinary
SERGEANT	Graham Lowden	Colin Burke	Bill Holland	Pippa McLeod
4 WAY TEST/ OBJECT	Vanessa Rousseau	Janey Ball		Garnet Carr
GRACE & TOAST	Christine Calothi	Jamie Hart		Geraldine Nicol
ATTENDANCE	Vanessa Rousseau	Glynis Menné		Andy Ismay
FELLOWSHIP	Terry Lancaster	Graham Finlayson		Tinus de Jongh
MINUTES	Mike Young	Jenny Ibbotson		Shân Biesman-Simons
COMMENT	Pieter van Aswegen	Rochelle Malherbe		Heidi Andersson
THANK SPEAKER	Corinne Hudson	Richard Burnett		Nora See
INTRO SPEAKER	Michael Walwyn	Menno de Wet		Paul Spiller

Invited GUEST SPEAKERS

30 Jan **Jaco Boshoff** – *The wreck of the Solglimt*

6 Feb **Anthony Pierce** – *Swimming the English Channel*

If you cannot do your job on the day, please find someone who can do it instead of you, then contact the Sergeant on the day to update the roster. Please don't leave this until the Monday afternoon – let the Sergeant know in advance if you have not been able to arrange a swap. If you are going to be away for particular future meetings let Peter Ennis know.



Rotary Club of Newlands Office Bearers

Chris Beech	President	chris@aaam.co.za
Bill Meyer	Secretary	meyport@iafrica.com
Peter Ennis	Treasurer	treasurer@newlands.org.za
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Andy Ismay	Entrepreneurship	andy@quicktint.co.za

Books for the World

For all educational school books and novels for age from early education to High school

CONTACT: FRANCOISE NDAYIZIGIYE 0737317056

St Anthony's Catholic Church, Ndabeni Street, Langa

