



# HOWZAT!



## ROTARY CLUB OF NEWLANDS “The club that appeals”



**President: Graham Finlayson**  
**Secretary: Bill Meyer**



Editor: Peter Ennis  
e-mail: [howzat@newlands.org.za](mailto:howzat@newlands.org.za)  
Newlands Rotary website: [www.newlands.org.za](http://www.newlands.org.za)  
Rotary District 9350 website: [www.rotary9350.co.za](http://www.rotary9350.co.za)

8 January 2018

## 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.

**ATTENDANCE:** Notice of apologies and guests and/or meal specifics to email Paul Spiller at [dr.paul.spiller@gmail.com](mailto:dr.paul.spiller@gmail.com) and copy to Bill Meyer at [meyport@iafrica.com](mailto:meyport@iafrica.com) before 10h00 on Monday mornings please.

### Comment

*Via Jenny Howard*

### The Antilibrary: Why Unread Books Are The Most Important



How are we to navigate the unknown – the vast chasm between what we know, what we don't know, and coming to grips with what is unknowable?

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This week, I caught myself feeling guilty as I walked into my office and looked at the ever-growing number of unread books.

The library, as I call my office, is full of books I might never get to in my life let alone read this week. (See that picture above, I haven't read most of those books.) My bookshelf, which seems to reproduce on its own, is a constant source of ribbing from my friends.

"You'll never read all of those," they say. And they're right. I won't. That's not really how it works.

**"It is our knowledge – the things we are sure of – that makes the world go wrong and keeps us from seeing and learning."**

– *Lincoln Steffens*

Some questions are only asked by people with a fundamental misunderstanding. The friends who walk into my office and ask, "have you read all of these" miss the point of books.

In his book, [The Black Swan](#), Nassim Taleb describes our relationship between books and knowledge using the legendary Italian writer Umberto Eco (1932-2016).

The writer Umberro Eco belongs to that small class of scholars who are encyclopedic, insightful, and nondull. He is the owner of a large personal library (containing thirty thousand books), and separates visitors into two categories: those who react with "Wow! Signore professore dottore Eco, what a library you have. How many of these books have you read?" and the others—a very small minority—who get the point is that a private library is not an ego-boosting appendages but a research tool. **The library should contain as much of what you do not know as your financial means ... allow you to put there.** You will accumulate more knowledge and more books as you grow older, and the growing number of unread books on the shelves will look at you menacingly. **Indeed, the more you know, the larger the rows of unread books. Let us call this collection of unread books an antilibrary.**

Taleb adds:

We tend to treat our knowledge as personal property to be protected and defended. It is an ornament that allows us to rise in the pecking order. So this tendency to offend Eco's library sensibility by focusing on the known is a human bias that extends to our mental operations. People don't walk around with anti-résumés telling you what they have not studied or experienced (it's the job of their competitors to do that), but it would be nice if they did. Just as we need to stand library logic on its head, we will work on standing knowledge itself on its head.

A good library is filled with mostly unread books. That's the point. Our relationship with the unknown causes the very problem Taleb is famous for contextualizing: [the black swan](#). Because we underestimate the value of what we don't know and overvalue what we do know, we fundamentally misunderstand the likelihood of surprises.

The antidote to this overconfidence boils down to our relationship with knowledge. The anti-scholar, as Taleb refers to it, is "someone who focuses on the unread books, and makes an attempt not to treat his knowledge as a treasure, or even a possession, or even a self-esteem enhancement device — a skeptical empiricist."

My library serves as a visual reminder of what I don't know.

From [www.farnamstreetblog.com](http://www.farnamstreetblog.com)

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## Previous Meeting

Minutes have not been forthcoming...

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[www.facebook.com/newlandsrotary](http://www.facebook.com/newlandsrotary)

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[Newlands Rotary Club Runner Calendar](#)

### FUTURE FIXTURES

Year Planner

Please advise the secretary promptly of any additions or changes

#### January 2018

Mon 8 Partners  
Mon 15 Ordinary  
Mon 22 Ordinary  
Mon 29 Business

#### February 2018

Mon 5 Partners  
Mon 12 Ordinary  
Mon 19 Ordinary  
Mon 26 Business

#### March 2018

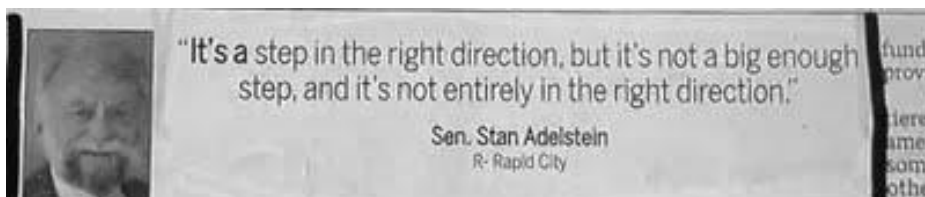
Sun 11 Cape Town Cycle Tour

**Happy  
Birthday**

**11 January  
Judy Spiller**

**11 January  
Chippy Burnett**

**13 January  
Jenny Ibbotson**



## UMPIRES AND SCORERS

DATE	8 January	15 January	22 January	29 January
MEETING	Partners	Ordinary	Ordinary	Business
SERGEANT	Willie Wijenberg	Pippa McLeod	Nora See	Richard House
4 WAY TEST/ OBJECT	Rochelle Malherbe	Pieter van Aswegen	Andrew Peile	Jenny Ibbotson
GRACE & TOAST	Michael Walwyn	Barbara Hurwitz	Jerome Eckles	Johnny Hurwitz
ATTENDANCE	Geraldine Nicol	Ian Pursch	Vanessa Rousseau	Shelley Finch
FELLOWSHIP	Garnet Carr	Tony van der Lith	Bill Meyer	Shân Biesman- Simons
MINUTES	Chris Beech	Wybe Meinesz	Heidi Andersson	Terry Lancaster
COMMENT	Richard Burnett	Peter Henshilwood	Colin Burke	Graham Lowden
THANK SPEAKER	Brian Pickup	John Winship	Regine le Roux	
INTRO SPEAKER	Bill Holland	Inez Arendse	Melinda Stapleton	

### Invited GUEST SPEAKERS

- 8 Jan **Colonel Brad Geysler** – *The beginnings of the Cape Town Cycle Tour*
- 15 Jan **Mary Burton**
- 22 Jan **Dr Liana Roodt** – *Project Flamingo*

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.



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## Rotary Club of Newlands Office Bearers

Graham Finlayson	President	graham@gfinarch.co.za
Bill Meyer	Secretary	meyport@iafrica.com
Peter Ennis	Treasurer	treasurer@newlands.org.za
Corinne Hudson	Community Service	corinne.hudson@gmail.com
Paul Spiller	Club Service	dr.paul.spiller@gmail.com
Lucian Pitt	International & Vocational Service	lucian.pitt@uct.ac.za
Regine le Roux	Public Relations	rotary@reputationmatters.co.za
Vanessa Rousseau	Youth Service	rousseau@iafrica.com
Shân Biesman-Simons	Membership	shan@biesman.co.za
Andy Ismay	Entrepreneurship	andy@quicktint.co.za
Chris Beech	Past President	christopher.beech67@gmail.com

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## 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**

