



## Editorial

### Gadzooks

#### A brief history of curse words



Well, shoot: Curse words have been through a lot of doggone stages to get to where they are today. Mark Twain once said that “under certain circumstances, profanity provides a relief denied even to prayer,” and people have been swearing as long as they’ve been praying. What is considered “cursing” or “swearing” has always depended on what was taboo at that point in time, whether it be blasphemous or simply crude. These off-limits words and topics have shifted over time, too. Here’s a brief look at the history of cursing.

#### The Original Curse

Why do we call forbidden terms “curse” or “swear” words? It’s likely the English terms evolved from the Bible, where “swearing” was sometimes used to refer to false promises or lies, such as when someone claims to do something that is not possible. These were considered vain oaths, and this “swearing” would sometimes be made in God’s name. Some of the earliest expletives were phrases referencing religion, such as “by God’s bones,” “God’s nails,” or really anything to do with God that wasn’t a literal and sincere oath.

Frequently, curse words originated from the combination of two or more taboo words pushed together in a way that obscured the literal meaning, creating a new slang term in the process. For instance, “gadzooks” was a curse used in place of “God’s hooks,” and by the 1600s, the word “zounds” — a shortening of “God’s wounds” — appeared in William Shakespeare’s *Othello* and *King John*. In the 19th century, people in Ireland used “bejabbers” as a way to get around saying “by Jesus.”

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#### March in Rotary

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene  
Month

**Wynberg Rotary meets every  
Thursday, 6 for 6.30pm,  
Western Province Cricket  
Club.**

For more information about our  
club, like us on Facebook or visit  
our website

## The Rise of the Four-Letter Word

The phrase “four-letter word” was first used as a euphemism for swear words in the 1920s, and for good reason: Of the approximately 84 commonly used American English swear words, 29 of them have four letters, including some of the most popular. “Damn,” for instance, appeared as a verb as early as the 13th century, meaning “to condemn,” and was used as an exclamation starting in the 17th century.

### Swearing Goes to Hollywood

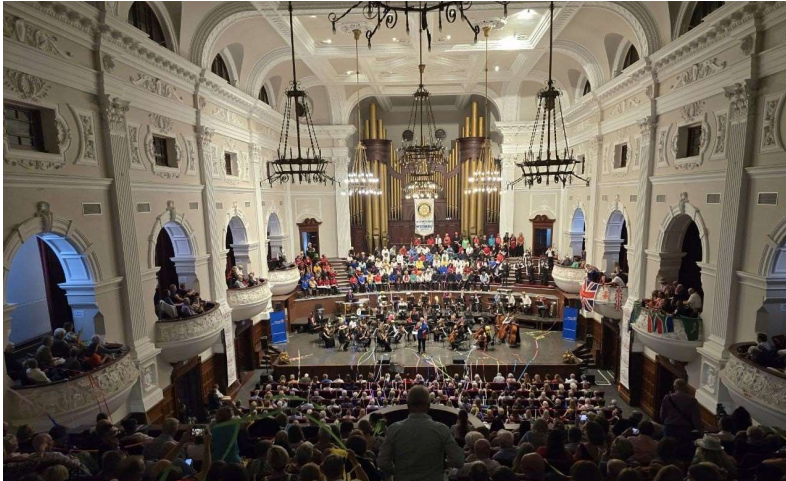
By the 20th century, the explosion of mass media brought curse words to the mainstream. Filmmakers even had to fight to get the now-classic line “Frankly, my dear, I don’t give a damn” into *Gone With The Wind*. Producer David O. Selznick told regulators, “This word as used in the picture is not an oath or a curse. The worst that could be said of it is that it’s a vulgarism.”

Comedian Lenny Bruce was arrested multiple times in the 1960s for “obscenity” for using explicit language, and in 1972, George Carlin was arrested for performing his “Seven Dirty Words You Can’t Say on Television” act, even though he wasn’t on television at the time (he was performing at Summerfest in Milwaukee, Wisconsin). A year later, Carlin’s routine was played on the radio, which led to a series of court cases about what language should be banned from broadcast radio and TV. In 1999, the CBS series *Chicago Hope* brought the first scripted curse word to network TV when actor Mark Harmon said “sh\*\* happens.” (Prior to this, swearing on TV was limited to cable television.) Today, the film industry’s Classification and Rating Administration decides just how many of those naughty words it takes to add up to an R-rating.

*Source: Historical Facts*

## PROMS 2026

*Pics by James Edwards*



# Minutes of the last club meeting

Meeting date: 19 March 2026

Compiled by David Barnard

<i>Attendance</i>	14 members present, 5 apologies Visiting Rotarians; Sue Holmes (Luderitz/Cayman Islands) and Lyle Staab (one of the Chicago Clubs).
<i>Fellowship</i>	25 March: President Justin's Birthday.
<i>From the President's chair</i>	President Justin welcomed the guests and those members present. Presidential notices; PI Workshop to be held with Francois attending. POETS will be held on 30 April 11 April we will be hosting an Interact event at /Bergvliet High from 11am to 1pm. This takes the place of our regular meeting on 9 April and members are requested to attend, to assist with the catering and to provide a Rotary presence and any information to our Interactors. Please make a special effort to attend. The Club will be sending 2 candidates to RYLA (From Norman Henshilwood).
<i>Members' moments</i>	Dennis told us that his being patched up after an altercation with some Cabinetry was unrelated to the tumble his daughter, Serin took outside her block of flats. We wish them both a speedy recovery! Francois in proud possession of his Norwegian Drone licence
<i>Slots</i>	Global Grant. The grant for MOT is getting under way with a kick off meeting with MOT planned for Monday 23 March.  There were a number of Proms Slots Miike gave a brief explanation of Proms for our guests and stressed the importance of this event for our Club and encouraged members to have fun too! Graham announced a Sell-out for both nights!!!! Barry highlighted the contributions of our service providers and marketers Dave spoke about the people power!
<i>Guest speaker</i>	There was no guest speaker although both Sue and Lyle gave us a brief outline of their Clubs and their activities. Lyle presented not one, but two banners. Sgt Karen followed this with a story about a BULL!
<i>Swindle</i>	David's name was drawn, but he only managed to draw the 7 of spades from a dwindling pack. (Ahhh Shame!) Graham won the attendance prize.
<i>Presidential quote</i>	This day in History: Justin noted St Patricks Day on 17 March Albert Einstein published his study on the quantum nature of light in 1905. The Soviet Union had the first person to walk in space in 1965. And on the topic of the Middle East, this time of March 2003 marked the beginning of the invasion of Iraq.  The meeting concluded with the 4 Way Test

# Duty Roster

	26 March	2 April	9 April	16 April	23 April
	<i>Business meeting</i>	<i>No meeting</i>	<i>No meeting</i>	<i>Proms choirs</i>	<i>Petrus Marais</i>
<b>Sergeant</b>	Schreiber			Lunt	Jackson
<b>Minutes</b>	Cleveland			Thomas	Edwards
<b>Wynpress editorial</b>	Jackson			Klotz-Gleave	Lunt
<b>Grace</b>	Overbosch			Schonegevel	Schreiber
<b>Loyal toast</b>	Barnard K			Bird	Cleveland
<b>International toast</b>	Todd			Van Heyningen	Barnard D

## Dates to Diarise

<b>11 April</b>	Interact event at Bergvliet High School. 11.00-13.00. Details TBA.
<b>16 April</b>	Invitation to the reps. of the Proms choirs to join us for supper and fellowship.
<b>23 April</b>	Petrus Marais from the Alta du Toit Centre for intellectually disabled adults.
<b>21 May</b>	Bruce Probyn from the Principals' Academy.

### STRESS MANAGEMENT

A young lady confidently walked around the room while explaining stress management to an audience, holding a raised glass of water. Everyone knew she was going to ask the ultimate question, 'half empty or half full?' She fooled them all ..... "How heavy is this glass of water?" she inquired with a smile. Answers called out ranged from 200g to 500g. She replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long I hold it. If I hold it for a minute, that's not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my right arm. If I hold it for a day, you'll have to call an ambulance. In each case it's the same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes." She continued, "and that's the way it is with stress. If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, as the burden becomes increasingly heavy, we won't be able to carry on." As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest before holding it again. When we're refreshed, we can carry on with the burden. So, as early in the evening as you can, put all your burdens down. Don't carry them through the evening and into the night... Pick them up tomorrow.

# Tailpiece

A husband went to the police station to file a "missing person" report for his missing wife:

Husband :-I lost my wife, she went shopping and hasn't come back yet.

Inspector :-What is her height?

Husband :-I never checked.

Inspector :-Slim or healthy?

Husband :-Not slim, can be healthy.

Inspector :-Colour of eyes?

Husband :-Never noticed.

Inspector :-Colour of hair?

Husband :-Changes according to season.

Inspector :-What was she wearing?

Husband :-Not sure whether it was a dress or a suit.

Inspector :-Was she driving?

Husband :-Yes.

Inspector :-Colour of the car? . . . . .

Husband :-black Audi A8 with supercharged 3.0 litre V6 engine generating 333 horse power teamed with an eight-speed tiptronic automatic transmission with manual mode. And it has full LED headlights for all light functions and has a very thin scratch on the front left door.  
.....and then the husband started crying.

Inspector:-Don't worry sir,.....We *will* find your car.