

SOUTHLAND HERB SOCIETY

HERBAL HARVEST

October 2023 Newsletter



This Month's Meeting

Herb Bus trip

Saturday, 28 October 2023.

Meet at the Blind Low Vision Centre,

Queens Drive ready to depart 8.30

for further details see pg 3.

President's report

Meeting report

Recipe

Book Review

Profile

Quote:

Never regret anything that made you smile – Mark Twain

Contributions for inclusion in the newsletter, need to be with the editor by the 10th of the month. Thank you for your co-operation with this.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the October edition of the Herbal Harvest.

As I put the final touches to this month's newsletter I am watching the All Blacks vs Ireland and it's hard not to be distracted!!

As always, there is some great reading in this newsletter.

Thank you to the September group for their excellent reports of their meeting on spices. We went to Pinch of Spice and learnt about the curry spices from their manager.

If you have not shared your profile in the last two years, I would love you to send it to me so we can publish one each month.

There is really important information about the October and November events. Please read and respond quickly.

Happy reading
Rose



It Peony Tree flowering time!!!

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Julianne Watson

Hello Everyone

It seems I missed a great night at the Pinch of Spice. There was a lot of positive feedback. Thank you to Annette, Pam, Susie, Julie for all your organising.



We had an amazing time in Wellington and WOW was fantastic. The outfits, singing, choreography, acrobatics were all great. People are so clever and entries came from 23 countries.

We went up on the cable car and at the top came across the Fragrifert Parfumeur. It is such an interesting place going back to the early 1900's when Gustave Fragrifert came to New Zealand and developed our first perfumery.



This photo shows rose petals drying - and we thought we dried a lot of rose petals! The other photos show the current Parfumeur who is from the Netherlands originally. His name is Francesco van Eerd and he makes personalised perfumes as a variety of others and other products. You can sample perfumes and there is a video showing the history. Well worth a visit and the cable car is free for seniors!

I have bought the microphone and speaker and we will use it on the bus trip. Thanks to those of you who have paid and told Jocelyn you are coming. We still have a few places available. Please let Jocelyn know as soon as possible. Thank you Jocelyn for all your ringing and organising. We are really looking forward to the day. I am sorry the date doesn't suit some of you. We will plan the AGM at home next year.

Our November progressive dinner is coming up and make sure you look up what your team and month are contributing. Think of a \$5 present you could gift or make. Try to recycle or reuse like a plant, a food item or craft and wear a Christmas decoration or clothing so we get in the spirit!

Looking forward to seeing you all.

Julianne



OCTOBER AGM AND BUS TRIP



PATERSON
PARK AND GARDENS



IF YOU HAVE NOT PAID FOR THIS TRIP, YOU NEED TO DO IT NOW, PLEASE.

Hello there... Just a quick reminder to those coming, on the Herb Bus trip on Saturday 28 October. We are visiting Gore Gardens; Bannerman Park, Gore; and Paterson Park and Gardens Waikaka.

- Meet at the Blind Low Vision Centre, Queens Drive ready to depart 8.30.
- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear, ready for any changes of weather we may encounter(!) as we are predominantly outside for the day.
- Bring your own drinks and lunch. (We may get a chance to stop at coffee cart in Gore near toilets, prior to going to Gore Gardens)
- Afternoon tea is part of the entry charge at Paterson Park and Gardens.
- Cash for raffles.
- Cash /eftpos for shop at Paterson Park and Gardens, selling toys and locally made woollen garments. (No credit)
- We will return to Invercargill at 4pm when the gardens close at Paterson's in Waikaka.

Looking forward to 'getting away' and checking out these gardens amongst friends. All those unable to come we'll let you know all about it.

Jocelyn, Adair, Noeline, Sue and Amanda



MONTHLY MEETING REPORT

Our evening at A Pinch of Spice.

A group of about 35 Herb Society members met at the Pinch of Spice restaurant for our September meeting. Annette welcomed us all and introduced Anand who spoke to us on behalf of Manish who owns the restaurant. He outlined Manish's journey from India to Invercargill and then passed a plate of spices around for us to investigate.



Manish left India in 1997 to come to New Zealand. He opened his first restaurant in 2016 in Christchurch followed by restaurants in Picton and in Invercargill. Unfortunately, he had to close the Christchurch restaurant recently due to staff shortages. All his chefs are from India as are all the spices used in the restaurants.



We were served delicious plates of starters and it was quite an experience tasting them all.

Suzie presented a book review on *The Little Book of Curry*. This was very entertaining and Suzie's sense of humour and the way she spoke was thoroughly enjoyed by all of us. This book sounds like it would well worth reading and I particularly liked the section on great tips on how to cook a good curry.



The main course was then served and consisted of lamb Rogan Josh, Vegetarian Curry and Butter Chicken served with naan bread and rice. It was soooo good! People were able to order desserts if they wished.



We were seated at very long tables which made it a little hard to hear what Anand was saying so rather than make stuff up I thought I would share the following passage about the history of Butter Chicken from Pinch of Spice's facebook page which I found interesting.

BUTTER CHICKEN

The curry was developed at the Moti Mahal restaurant in the Daryaganj neighbourhood of Old Delhi (India) in the 1950s, after the Partition of India by Kundan Lal Jaggi and Kundan Lal Gujral, who were both Punjabi migrants from Peshawar. The curry was made "by chance" by mixing leftover tandoori chicken in a tomato gravy, rich in butter (makhan). In 1974, a recipe was published for "Murgh makhanii (Tandoori chicken cooked in butter and tomato sauce)".

In 1975, the English phrase "butter chicken" curry first appeared in print, as a specialty of the house at Gaylord Indian restaurant in Manhattan.



And an explanation of the samosa, also from their Facebook page:



THE SAMOSA is prepared with an all-purpose flour (locally known as maida) and stuffed with a filling, often a mixture of diced and cooked or mashed boiled potato, green peas, ginger, spices and green chilli (optional). A samosa can be vegetarian or non-vegetarian, depending on the filling. The entire pastry is deep-fried in vegetable oil or rarely ghee to a golden brown. It is served hot, often with fresh green chutney, such as mint, coriander, or tamarind. It can also be prepared in a sweet form. Samosas are often served in chaat, along with the traditional accompaniments of either a chickpea or a white pea preparation, served with yogurt, tamarind paste and green chutney, garnished with chopped onions, coriander, and chaat masal.

RECIPE

BUTTER CHICKEN Ingredients

- 6 tablespoons butter, divided
- 2 lbs boneless/skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1" chunks
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tbsp garam masala
- 1 Tbsp fresh grated ginger
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 ½ cups tomato sauce**** (or one 14 oz can would work)
- 2 cups cream*
- salt & pepper
- lime & cilantro, for garnish
- naan & rice for serving



Instructions

1. Using 2 tablespoon of butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat, brown the pieces of the chicken so each side is browned. They do not need to be fully cooked all the way through. Work in batches, and set aside when you're done.
2. Melt another 2 tablespoon of butter in the pan over medium heat. Add the onion, and cook until beginning to soften — about three minutes. Add the garlic, garam masala, ginger, chili powder, cumin, and cayenne. Stir to combine, and cook for about 45 seconds before adding the tomato sauce.
3. Bring the mixture to a simmer and let cook for five minutes before adding the cream. Bring the mixture back to a simmer, add the browned chicken, and let simmer for 10-15 minutes. Keep the heat low here — not a rolling boil.
4. Stir in the remaining 2 tablespoon of butter, and season with salt and pepper, to taste.
5. Serve garnished with lime and cilantro, alongside rice and naan.

BOOK REVIEW

The Little Book of Curry

Susie Bernard



INTRODUCTION

From the sumptuous regal cuisine of northern India to the bright fiery red curries of tropical south east Asia and the earthy hot-hot-hot dishes of the Caribbean, curry is now truly global and the options and variations available are as diverse as the people who cook them.

But curry had to start somewhere before it got everywhere.
Where did it all start??

As we know Curry powder is a pre-prepared mix of spices BUT has a story of its own to tell. Usually bright yellow, its seen as a handy shortcut in the curry making process, but it is eschewed by purists who insist that the only authentic way to prepare a curry is to select and grind the spices yourself.

Certainly it was never used in traditional Indian cooking. Which ever view you take there is no denying it is the quickest and most convenient way to make curry.

This Little Book sees many pages devoted to its history around the world with some interesting pages the likes of.....

- How many kinds of curry are there?
- Why do we love curry so much?
- How did curry begin?
- How did curry become a global dish?

I love the section devoted to Popular Curry Spices as whilst we can all buy curry powder in the supermarket it is actually made up of numerous spices ground together to make the powder.

To name a few of the key ingredients in a good curry powder there are

- All Spice – or pimento as you may know it
- Amchoor – made from powdered dried green mangoes
- Black Mustard Seeds
- Cardamom – Highly prized since ancient times as the Queen of Spices
- Black Pepper – If Cardamon is the queen then black pepper is the king of spices
- Cinnamon
- Cloves
- Coriander Seeds – in earlier times thought to be an aphrodisiac
- Cumin – believed that cumin stopped chickens and men from wandering
- Fenugreek
- Galangal – same family as ginger and turmeric
- Ginger

- Asafoetida (Hing) – also known as the Devil's Dung but once cooked has a garlic onion taste
- Star Anise
- Tamarind

This little book helps you get started with your own **starter spice collection** and how to prepare them into curry powder. I then read a lovely section on growing your own curry herbs and spices so for those of you that love your gardens and love a good curry then it's worth a read.

The big names then begin to come out of this tiny book with a back story behind each. You can read all about the Vindaloo, Tikka Masala, Balti, Korma and Jalfrezi (my favourite) and find out more about their delicious accompaniments – Naan Bread, Chapati's, Roti and Paratha bread much of which is on the menu here tonight.

Recipes galore follow at the end of the book with one of my favourites being the Lime Pickle on Page 122 and also some top tips on how to cook a good curry.

Here are some of my favourite tips from the book

- Always use fresh ginger and garlic. If in doubt use equal quantities
- Never let your spice burn. If you do burn your spices, discard and start again otherwise that bitter taste will cling stubbornly to your curry all the way to your broken hearted taste buds
- For vegetarian options use Indian paneer cheese which is robust enough for cooking and pairs very well with spinach, tofu, nuts and chickpeas

So as our whirlwind curry journey draws to a close, the book shows how this ancient approach to cooking has developed into a universally loved cuisine.

The popularity of curry will never wane and it remains ever evolving with the constant emergence of modern, vibrant recipes as tastes change and ingredients become more widely available.

Of all cuisines, curry is perhaps the most open to experimentation, which makes it all the more exciting to explore - and this little book of curry takes us on a lovely wee journey to achieve just that.



Finally I'd like to finish with a short poem written by William Makepeace Thackeray back in November 1846.

Mr Thackeray was a renowned author and illustrator and is best known for his novel *Vanity Fair*. He was born in Calcutta in India so if you are wondering why he had any links or interest in curry this could be why.

His health eventually declined due to excessive eating, drinking and lack of exercise. Perhaps too much curry!! And he died from a stroke at the age of fifty two!!

“A Poem to Curry”

*Three pounds of veal my darling girl prepares,
And chops it nicely into little squares;
Five onions next procures the little minx
(The biggest are the best her Samiwel thinks),
And Epping butter nearly half a pound,
And stews them in a pan until they're browned.*

*What's next my dexterous little girl will do?
She pops the meat into the savoury stew,
With curry powder table-spoonfuls three,
And milk a pint (the richest that may be)
And, when the dish stewed for half an hour,
A lemon's juice she'll pour it pour.*

*Then bless her! Then she gives the luscious pot
A very gentle boil – and serves quite hot.
PS – Beef, mutton, rabbit if you wish,
Lobsters or prawns, or any kind of fish,
Are fit to make a CURRY. ‘Tis, when done,
A Dish for Emperors to feed upon.*



MEMBER PROFILE

Pam Wilson

I am a true blue Southlander, born and raised in this special place. I am the eldest of the five daughters born to Denise and Murray Faul and enjoyed a wonderful childhood surrounded by whānau. Some of my favourite memories include helping Grandad in his glasshouse (he grew the best tomatoes ever), climbing fruit and walnut trees in the orchard where we lived at Kennington and playing in the gnarly old rhododendron trees near the ruins of the old hotel that once stood on our property. I was a keen highland dancer and went on to teach and judge until I had my own children, who all learned highland dancing as well. My sisters and I all had ponies/horses and went to numerous shows, gymkhanas etc. Our school holidays were consumed with planning and running our neighbourhood gymkhanas (Penny Ivey will remember these!)



I have been married to Robin for a very long time! We have 3 daughters and 6 grandchildren who give us enormous pleasure. They live in Auckland, Gibbston and Riverton so we do have some very cool places to visit!

I was a cartographer with the Dept of Lands and Survey from leaving school until the arrival of my first child. I also worked from home doing a variety of signwriting jobs for some well needed pocket money while I was a stay at home Mum. After our youngest child started school I decided on a total career change and studied for a teaching degree whilst working in a childcare centre. From there I went on to a lecturing position in ECE at the Southland Campus of the Dunedin College of Education and then to Senior Teacher the Kindergartens South. I retired from that position four years ago.



My interest in things gardening started as a child with Grandad's encouragement. My knowledge is still pretty limited but the interest is definitely still there. It has been great having the opportunity to learn so much from Herb Society people. One special plant I always treasure in my garden are the Christmas lilies that came from my Mum's garden and originally from my great grandmother's garden. My four sisters all grow them too so they will never be lost. Many of my favourite plants and trees originate from memories of them being in the gardens of my whānau.

I am a keen crafter and enjoy patchwork and making items from up-cycled clothes. I have made many baby quilts and Christmas stockings for all the new borns in our extended whānau.

The highlight of this year was our whānau holiday in Rarotonga to celebrate my birthday in June. All 14 of us went and had such a special time together. It was just a few weeks after my Mum passed away which made our time even more special. There's nothing like being with whānau!!

SOUTHLAND COMMUNITY FOOD SERIES

The Southland series will take place on two weekends, **Saturday 28 & Sun 29 October** and **Sat 2 & Sun 3 December**. These full-day workshops will be taking place in and around Riverton.

This two weekend series will include:

- Exploring the potential of collaborative distribution
- An introduction to community-scale food production methods
- Hands-on workshops (eg bed making, seeding, weeding, compost making, etc.)
- Perennial food production and Forest Garden systems
- Small-scale flower growing

We will visit Last Light Lodge in Tuatapere, a new organic flower grower in Waimatuku, an established forest garden in Riverton, the Riverton Organic Food Co-op, and the Aparima College School & Community Gardens.

Again, there will be lots of good food! Morning tea and lunch will be provided, featuring produce from our lovely local growers.

Note: We had initially advertised that the first workshop weekend was the 27th & 28th of October, but have corrected this to the **28th & 29th of October**.

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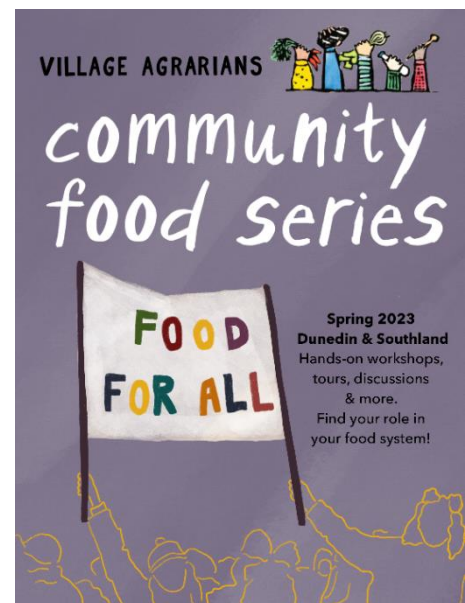
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COMING UP

OCTOBER MEETING and AGM **Gore and Patterson's Garden, Waikaka**

Team: Jocelyn, Adair, Lyn, Sue F and Noeline.

Enquires to Jocelyn – ph: 027-483-3672

Subs are due by the end of November each year.

\$35 single or \$50 family

Payment by direct banking

03 1746 0002322 00

Please include your name as the reference.
or with cash to Gillian Knarston.



HERB EMBROIDERY GROUP

Last Wednesday of the month. Ring Christine for details.

03217-4563

NOVEMBER PROGRESSIVE DINNER

Planning is underway for our Christmas dinner. Each group member is responsible for providing one of the following courses. Husbands and partners are invited this year, we so when thinking about your dish for the evening please provide enough food for 8 people.

January, February, March groups to make nibbles.

April, May, June to make salad, vegetable dishes.

July, August, September, October to make desserts.

Your leader will be in contact with you soon. Thank you.

The Southland Herb Society *accepts no liability for any ill effects resulting in the use of information printed in this newsletter. Every effort has been made to ensure that all details are accurate. If in doubt, please consult a qualified herbal practitioner. Opinions and views expressed in any article are not necessarily those of the editor or the committee.*