



CHAMOMILE

April 2013

Meetings held on the third Tuesday of the month at the Senior Citizens Hall, High Street North, Carterton (opposite Wild Oats Café).

As far as possible, Saturday meetings will be held on the 1st Saturday of each month.

Annual Sub:

Individual: \$20*

Families: \$30*

*\$5 reduction on subscription if paid up member of Herb Federation

Quarterly Newsletter

Executive Committee

Lyn Tomlinson
May Brown
Agnes Jones
Gail Edwards
Val Richardson
Andra Bramwell
Christine Paul
Bill Edginton

Officers

Chairperson: Lyn Tomlinson
Secretary: Agnes Jones
Treasurer: Gail Edwards
Publicity: Andra Bramwell
News/Library: Bill Edginton

The Wairarapa Herb Society

(Estab. September 1982 and registered under the Charities Act No. C.C. 29074)

P O Box 42 Masterton.

Objective: To promote and share knowledge of herbs, their cultivation and use.

The Society can accept no liability for any ill-effects resulting from information presented in this newsletter.

Thank you May and Welcome Lyn

At our recent AGM, we thanked May Brown for her years as Chairperson Coordinator of our Society. May was described as someone who gets things done and is so good with people. She has moved us along and would be a wonderful CEO for any organization. We are glad May will remain as a committee member and thus continue to make her distinctive input to our activities. We now welcome Lyn Tomlinson as our new Chairperson.

Notice Board

Subscription renewals are now due. A form for completion is attached to this newsletter.

May

Saturday, 4th 1.30 p.m. Visit Zelda Bruce at Yebo (next door to The Tin Hut at Tauherenikau). Zelda will give a demonstration on the making of mosaics and we shall have an opportunity to try our hand at some of the processes. We have invited Kapiti and Upper Hutt groups to join us, so can you please bring a contribution to a 'High Tea'.

Tuesday, 21st 1.30 p.m. Senior Citizens Hall, Carterton.

June

Saturday, 8th 12.30 for 1p.m. Mid Winter Luncheon at Te Whiti Homestead, 523 Te Whiti Road, Masterton. Nibbles will be at 12.30 and lunch at 1 p.m. **Cost is \$30 per person. Please complete the attached form and hand to Val with a cheque at the meeting on 21 May or post to Lyn by that date.**

Tuesday, 18th 1.30 p.m. Senior Citizens Hall, Carterton

Saturday, 22nd 11.30 a.m. visit Mt Holdsworth to join Di Batchelor on a fungi search. Bring your own lunch and sturdy shoes.

July

Saturday, 6th 2 p.m. Visit Martinborough Manor Country Retreat, 29 Cromarty Drive, Martinborough, the makers of handcrafted jams, preserves. Cost for adults \$15 for a farm tour, afternoon tea and tastings – takes about 1 and ¼ hours. If you do not want to do tour, will cost \$13.50 for tea and tastings.

Herb Symbols in Pascal Meal



On Maundy Thursday a Pascal or Passover Meal was observed at St Mark's, Carterton. Symbols at the meal included **parsley**, a green herb to remind us of springtime and new life (Passover is a spring festival in the northern hemisphere) and **horseradish or bitter herbs** to remind us of the pain of slavery. The youngest person present asked the traditional question: 'On all other nights we eat all kinds of herbs – why on this night do we eat especially bitter herbs?' The reply came back: 'We eat moror (bitter herb) to recall that the Egyptians embittered the lives of our fathers, as it is written: "And the Egyptians hated the children of Israel, and tormented them and teased them: and they made their life bitter with hard works in clay, and brick, and with all manner of service where they were overcharged in the works of the earth" (Exodus: 1:13-14).

AGM



The photo shows left to right Agnes, May (sitting) Lyn, Anna, Val (in front) and Bill.

The Society's financial report for the year was approved. It was agreed that the committee should look at possible special projects which might be funded from monies held with the Wairarapa Building Society.

In her annual report, May thanked particularly Agnes Jones, 'our wonderful Secretary', Gail Edwards for all her work as Treasurer, Marilyn Williamson and lately Bill Edginton for producing Chamomile, Andra Bramwell for publicity, and the other members of the Executive Committee, Val Richardson, Ngaire Gregor and Christine Paul.

May took the opportunity to review the Society's work since she was appointed Chairperson in 2006. She noted that the present membership stands at 50. Over the years the Society has grown in strength with a great Committee and keen members.

The library has continued to grow and May encouraged members to use it.

A pattern has now been set for Tuesday meetings, with a member taking charge of each meeting, and regular Saturday outings are held for members who work and cannot attend Tuesday meetings.

All copies of our newsletter have been sourced. One set is in our library and a second at the Archives in Masterton. Our Green Book *Herbal Green and Practical Tips* was produced in March 2009. It has been reprinted three times. In 2011 we held a one day seminar. This was a great success and we plan to hold a half day seminar following the same format.

Reiki Book Published

Anna Simms has just published her book, *Be Who You Are – The Human Face of Reiki*. It offers a glimpse into her personal path along the Reiki road, which is intended to enlighten and empower others to explore the mysteries of life. To reserve a signed copy contact Anna (06)370 8307. Price \$25. Special \$5 discount for Herb Society members.



Herb of the Month (February: May Brown) Arnica Montana.... the miracle herb.

Arnica Montana is also known as Leopard's Bane or Falkrat. The German word Falkrat (Fal - fall and Kraut - herb) gives us the use for the plant - a herb for falls. It is a daisy, grows about 1 ft tall, has a long shaped leaf and is a perennial.

Arnica is a homeopathic remedy, comes in tablet form, liquid with a dropper (great for children - just drop two or three drops on their tongue) and as a cream and oil. It should be the first thing you think of after an accident or injury or any traumatic experience, as it helps with shock, bleeding and bruising.

Arnica is anti-inflammatory and increases the re-absorption of internal bleeding. Use Arnica for bruising, sprains and muscle pains. It improves local blood supply and accelerates healing. Think of Arnica after accidents, after surgery, after childbirth, after falls and even a hard day in the garden.

Do not use on open wounds and do not take it before you need it. Because of its speedy action it could have a detrimental effect.

Herb of the Month (March: Anna Sims) Lavender



The properties of lavender are too numerous to mention so I will focus briefly on its growing, fragrant, therapeutic and culinary attributes.

It has long been a favourite of gardeners in the United Kingdom and remains popular in the Mediterranean. However, it is now popular globally partly because it is so easy to grow. It is an ideal landscaping plant because of its wide range of growing environments, low maintenance and low water requirements. It can be seen all over New Zealand, grown in various ways – as a hedge or as part of a flower or herb garden depending on the variety grown. From a feng shui perspective it offers protection to home owners if grown in front of a house.

One of my favourite varieties is *lavandula grosso* which is used principally for aromatherapy oils and scented perfumes. The plant is notable for its long spikes of deep purple lavender which attract masses of bees while it is out in full bloom. Once the blooms die off one is left with a plethora of stems to produce dried lavender bundles. I often strip each individual stem to make up lavender sachets as gifts for people. The fragrance is wonderful.

An important property of lavender is its therapeutic power; it is a natural antiseptic and antibiotic. The essential oil of lavender known as *lavandin* has those properties and is also used to treat wounds and burns. Its relaxing, soothing properties are calming for people and especially those with mild insomnia.

Lavender is also gaining popularity as a culinary accoutrement. It adds a unique flavour to a wide range of foods from meats to desserts to drinks. It is used in a variety of dishes including lavender beef roast, lavender cookies, lavender ice cream, lavender potatoes and beverages such as lavender lemonade. To create a delicious grilling rub, try a combination of lavender, rosemary, French thyme and sage. Bon appétit!

Recipes

http://www.what-about-lavender.com/lavender_lemonade.html

http://www.what-about-lavender.com/lavender_shortbread_cookies.html



A Simple Herb Vinegar

At our February Tuesday meeting, **Leonie Morris** talked to us about making herb vinegars. Here are her instructions for making a simple herb vinegar.

Choose a bottle with a screw lid. Sterilize the bottle: wash in hot water with detergent, and rinse thoroughly in hot water. Preheat oven at 110° c. for 10 minutes (once oven temperature is reached). Allow to cool in oven.

Ingredients: White vinegar, herbs, chilies (2 or 3)

Wash herbs and dry (a paper towel is best).

If using chilies, prick with a satay stick. This allows the vinegar to be absorbed into the chilies. Place chilies in bottle and then add herbs e.g. rosemary. More than one sprig looks nice. Fill with the vinegar* and cap. Store in a cool place, not in direct sunlight.

Use for mayonnaise or vinaigrette.

Other simple vinegars are: lemon peel and dill (excellent for fish); rosemary and allspice (with red or white vinegar; thyme or any herb combination).

*You may need to top the bottle up while chilies are absorbing vinegar.

Seed Saving



At our March meeting, **Helen Dew** spoke to us about seed saving. She said that the right to save and grow seed is being systematically transferred from farmers to large corporations. This action robs farmers and communities of a fundamental human right: the right to manage their traditional seed crops. The resulting loss of diversity poses a threat to natural ecosystems and to adequate food supplies for future generations.

Helen noted that Vandana Shiva, environment and human rights activist, predicts a world seed famine. However, although the situation is challenging, people are mobilising against this threat. In her book [Earth Democracy](#), Vandana Shiva reports a movement begun in 1994 that saw five million Indian peasants pledge to save and exchange seed, and to disobey any law that prevents them from doing so.

Helen said that seed evolves and adapts to local conditions, and is therefore best saved locally. Some varieties are easily saved by home gardeners. Varieties that require specialist knowledge and conditions are best left to organisations such as New Zealand's [Koanga Institute](http://www.koanga.org.nz/) <http://www.koanga.org.nz/>.

Two booklets produced by the Koanga Institute were recommended: **Save Your Own Seeds** and **Growing Nutrient Dense Food**. Helen also recommended the book **How to Grow Your Own Food: A manual for people who like to eat**, published by the Hamilton Permaculture Trust. These publications have been purchased for our library.

Book Review (February: Bill Edginton) *Ginny's Herb Book* (copy in WHS library)

This is a guide for New Zealand and Australian herb lovers. The author is Ginny Clayton who operates Ginny's Herbs, a mail order herb store at Whatitiri in Northland. Ginny's interest in herbs was kindled by Biodynamics, an holistic, organic method of farming. The book is a practical, user-friendly guide to home-grown herbs. Part 3 of the book deals with modern and traditional uses of herbs. It includes a section on herb vinegars: the kind of vinegar to use; the most popular herbs to use; method of making and storage; recipes for multi-herb vinegar and garlic vinegar; method of making spiced vinegars; and a recipe for garlic and shallot spiced vinegar.

Book Review: (March: Andra Bramwell) *New Zealand Kitchen Herbs for Health* by Gillian Polson

This book was donated to our Herb Society in November 1991 by the author, who owned 'The Herb Farm' in Akaroa. Coincidentally while reading other Herb Society newsletters I came across in the 'Otago Herbal News' October 2012 an obituary for Gillian. She was one of the instigators in the founding of the NZ Herb Federation. Gillian Polson was a proponent of Br Max Bircher-Benner who believed in the curative power of raw fruit and vegetables, air, water and sun and the intangible 'life force', and that 75% of our diet should be raw food using whole grains, nuts and legumes, fruit and vegetables daily.

The book is divided into two parts: Part 1 - herbs that are used daily; Part 2 - the herbs that are most popular and easily grown. Gillian was a great believer in the good of sprouted seeds. With each herb mentioned: almond, apple, comfrey, garlic, dandelion etc. the nutritional value and preventive use, plus curative value are given, usually with a recipe or two. She was probably ahead of her time - I saw a TV ad for almond milk as an alternative to cow's milk - Gillian gives a recipe for making this in her section on almonds and their benefits. Most sections on each herb begin with a quotation or verse - something I always enjoy.

Golden Raspberry



Photo from Rosa who says 'absolutely beautiful in colour. The taste is intensely raspberry and the best thing is the birds don't seem to be interested in the berry (because of the colour I suppose) - like the white alpine strawberry, WHOO HOO!'

Recent Activities: Secretary's Report

Our first meeting of the year was on one of our many hot days. We visited the garden of Carol McDonald and were welcomed with a cool lemon drink made by Carol and sat on a shady deck. As well as the flower garden there was a copse of trees and we enjoyed walking under that. We finished up with afternoon tea and it was good to meet again after the long Christmas break.

Our Tuesday afternoons continue to be interesting. We had a talk on making simple herb vinegar. Members took along their own glass bottles into which vinegar was poured. A red chilli was added together with a sprig of rosemary and the result was both useful and decorative.

We also had a visit from Helen Dew who has a garden where everything is conserved and re-cycled. She gave an interesting talk on seed preserving and handed out samples and recommended books which have now been bought for our library.

Our AGM was at the home of Eric Radersma. Eric has lived a big part of his life in Indonesia and he made us a tasty curry for our lunch. Our members took along the deserts so we were full of good food when the meeting started. May Brown is retiring as Chairperson so she was thanked for her input and we welcome Lyn Tomlinson as our new Chairperson.

**WAIRARAPA HERB SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP FORM 2013-2014**

Name.....

Address.....

Postcode..... Telephone number

E-mail (please print clearly).....

Are you an individual member of the Herb Federation? Yes/No*

Delete as appropriate:

I do/do not wish my details to be published on the Membership List.

I do/do not wish to receive the newsletter by e-mail.

(To help keep costs down we will send the newsletter by e-mail unless you let us know. A copy in the mail will be sent out to those who prefer to receive by post or do not have a computer).

**If you are an individual member of the Herb Federation of NZ you are entitled to a \$5.00 subsidy on your fees. Please indicate on this form if you are a member.*

Please attach your cheque for \$20.00 individual or \$30.00 family and hand to Val at the 21 May meeting or forward to:

**WAIRARAPA HERB SOCIETY
TREASURER
PO BOX 42
MASTERTON**

Mid Winter Luncheon Saturday 8 June at Te Whiti Homestead, Te Whiti Road, Masterton.

Name(s):.....

Cheque attached for \$.....

Cost is \$30 per person. Please complete this form and hand to Val with a cheque at the meeting on 21 May or post to Lyn Tomlinson, Villa Est, 31/55 Armstrong Ave., Carterton 5713 by that date.