



CHAMOMILE October 2015

Notice Board

Tuesday 20th October 1.30 p.m. Senior Citizens Hall, Carterton. Convener: Val Richardson. The topic is 'Grow your own pharmacy'. Alison Cane will present the book of the month and Christine Paul will present the herb of the month.

Friday 30th October - Monday 2 November. Biennial Conference Herb Federation, Copthorne Hotel.

Saturday 14 November 1.30 p.m. Christmas lunch /Visit at Joan Beaumont's garden, 95 Chester Road, Clareville. Meet 12.30 p.m. Bring a Christmas plate to share. We shall walk around Joan's 'garden in progress' which she has developed with the help of her daughter, Stacey Burkett BAppSc, a landscape designer. Stacey will talk about how they planned the garden.

Tuesday 17th November 1.30 p.m. Senior Citizens Hall, Carterton. Convener: Debbie Dittmer.

The Art of Seasoning

Presentation By Rosa Vallance at the August Tuesday meeting.

There are some general guidelines to using herbs in food – mainly you want to enhance the natural flavour of foods rather than dominate them. In understanding seasoning, it is essential to know that much of the best flavour and aroma comes from aromatic oils contained within the plant and that ingredients in these oils dissipate with time (or heat). Leaf herbs have the most aromatic oil and the best flavour when fresh. In their dried, whole form, the more delicate and refined qualities in the flavour have been lost; and the dried, finely chopped or powdered forms have the least flavour of all because more surface is available from which the volatile oils can escape. Herb seeds are generally used in their dried form but even here it is preferable to grind, powder or mash them instead of buying the ground form. A simple example of this would be peppercorns, coriander seed or cardamom seed pods.



Quite a few herbs are best used fresh – the more common herbs at their best fresh include: marjoram, rosemary, tarragon, thyme and lemon verbena – but these all reconstitute quite well in some form of liquid used in your recipe. Chives, parsley, basil, coriander, mint and dill or fennel leaf can be almost grass-like when used from a dry state. Sage imparts a totally different flavour when used fresh versus dried.

On average, in a dish with 4 to 6 servings, use 1/3 teaspoon dried powdered, 1/2 teaspoon dried coarsely crumbled or 1 tablespoon fresh chopped herb. Dried herbs require less because of their more concentrated form and less delicate flavour. Use your common sense – taste and smell to judge which herbs are stronger than others and adjust these to your liking.

Old 'Rule of Thumb'

1/4 to 1/3 tsp. dried, powdered herb = 1 tsp dried coarsely crumbled
 1 tsp. dried coarsely crumbled herb = 1 tbsp. fresh chopped
 1 tsp. dill seed = 1 flower head fresh
 1 tbsp. dried onion flakes = 1 med. sized raw onion
 1/4 tsp. garlic powder. (not garlic salt) = 1 clove fresh garlic"

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(The Art of Seasoning, continued)



One of the most distinctive classic blends, **Herbes de Provence** was put together at the meeting and samples distributed to be tried at home. This version of the blend has been worked out generally but other formulas differ wildly, some including tarragon, chervil, mint and/or orange peel and some including sweet spices (nutmeg, cloves) and pepper but all are basically faithful to the warm, sunny herbal flavours of southern France. After trying the recipe as written, please yourself and your palate by adding or changing some of the basic ingredients. Ingredients and method as follows:

1 tbsp. whole coriander seed; 1 tsp. fennel seed; 1 to 2 tbsp. each of dried: thyme, rosemary, basil, savory, oreganum; 1 tbsp. powdered bay leaves*; 2 tsp. dried lavender flowers. (Makes about ½ cup)

*Use an electric coffee grinder to powder dried bay leaves. Using a mortar, put about 4 tbsp. coarse salt with the coriander and fennel seed, crush all coarsely and reserve. Combine remaining ingredients and crush or process briefly, just to reduce any coarse pieces (do not grind to a powder). Add coriander and fennel, mix and blend well.

Herb Butters - Presentaion by Val Richardson



All herb butters are made in the same way, are very quick to make and very versatile. Fresh or dried herbs, ground spices, sun-dried tomatoes, chopped nuts, mustards, wines, fruit juices and many other ingredients can be incorporated.

Formed into a log, portioned, wrapped in greaseproof paper, they can be stored in the fridge for up to 5 days or the freezer up to a month.

Spread on to crusty bread, or serve on cooked vegetables, pasta, meat or fish.

Recipes

Parsley and Lemon: Combine 250g softened butter, 3 tbsp finely chopped fresh parsley, 2 tsp Grated lemon zest. 3 tsp lemon juice, salt and freshly ground pepper.

Blue Cheese and Herb: Combine 250g softened butter and 125g blue vein cheese, chopped. Add 1 tbsp each chopped fresh chives, mint and dill. Add 1 tbsp white wine.

Horseradish and mustard: Combine 250g softened butter, 2 tbsp horseradish cream, 1tbsp Dijon mustard and 2 tbsp finely chopped fresh parsley.

Ginger and spice: Combine 250g softened butter, 2 tsp finely grated fresh ginger, 1 tsp mild chilli powder and 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce.

Sage: Combine 250g softened butter, 1 tbsp finely chopped fresh sage leaves, 3 tbsp finely chopped flat leaf parsley leaves, 10 pitted green olives, roughly chopped and 2 anchovy fillets, finely chopped.

Coriander and Chilli: Combine 250g softened butter with 1/4 cup roasted and roughly chopped macadamia nuts, 3 tbsp roughly chopped fresh coriander leaves, 2 fresh lime leaves finely chopped, 1 large red chilli finely diced and 1 tbsp lime juice.

For a **discussion** about the **forthcoming Biennial Conference** of the Herb Federation, tune in to http://www.arrowfm.co.nz/podcasts/Carterton-Connections/CartConn_Mike_Debbie_20Oct15.mp3



Workshop 5 September

Ten lovely ladies worked diligently for 2 hours on Saturday 5 September and packaged quite a bit of interesting material for both our stall at the Aging with Attitude Day and the 'goodie bags' for the Biennial Conference. The Conference bags are now labelled and ready to be filled, and items for the Aging with Attitude Day were completed. Those present finished the afternoon with a very convivial afternoon tea at Clareville Bakery.

The photo shows l to r: Anna, Lorraine and Rosa at the workshop.

Foraging

At our September Tuesday meeting, Lorraine Erith talked about foraging. Here is what she had to say about chickweed.



Spring is an amazing time of year. Weeds are abundant everywhere. One of my favourites is chickweed. It grows everywhere and its presence indicates rich soil. Its leaves are small and soft and its tiny white flowers are star-like.

Chickweed is such a nourishing and strengthening food with bio - available nutrients - minerals (especially high in available iron and copper) protein, carotenes, and vital life energy. It thins the cellular membranes so nutrients are absorbed and utilized to their maximum, making it so good a food for people recovering from illnesses.

Chickweed's refrigerant properties help lower fevers, inflammations, and infections - coughs, colds, weak lungs, croup, whooping cough. Chickweed is very alkalizing and helps remove acidity from the body. Externally, chickweed can be used as a fresh poultice to draw out infections - from splinters and wounds. The juice is excellent for sore eyes, conjunctivitis, and sties. Chickweed baths /poultices soothe the burning pains of arthritis, rheumatism and gout.

Chickweed is one of my favourites because it is so versatile and can be made into so many types of yummy food: it can be eaten by the handful; the young leaves can be chopped up into a salad; it can be mixed in sandwiches, chopped up as a pizza topping, and blended into smoothies. You can juice the leaves, pour this into ice-block trays and freeze. My favourite of all is pesto.

Wild weed Pesto

1 cup of fresh picked chickweed leaves

1 cup of basil leaves

2 cloves of garlic

1/2 cup of olive oil

100g of hard cheese

100g of nuts - pine, cashew, walnuts - whatever takes your fancy. Put all ingredients into your blender and blend to your liking. This is a basic recipe. You can add other foraged herbs like cleavers nettles - just experiment and have fun.

I hope that I have left you with a healthy respect for this amazing wee herb.

We bid farewell to Lyn and Alaric Tomlinson who are leaving Carterton this month to move to Wellington. We thank them for their contributions to the Society and wish them well for the future. We understand Lyn plans to join us in the future on Saturday events.

Carterton Daffodil Festival



We had a stall at the Carterton Daffodil Festival, 13 September. The purpose was to promote both the Wairarapa Herb Society and the Biennial Conference of the Herb Federation which we are hosting 30 October-2 November. Our new sign provided a backdrop. A basket with bunches of herbs attracted attention and we had information material about both the society and the conference to hand out. We are hopeful that a number of people will join the society following this effort.



Programme for 2016

Ideas are sought for our programme in 2016. Let the committee know your suggestions for both the Tuesday meetings and Saturday visits.



Masterton

Aging with Attitude

International Day of Older Persons, October 1st was celebrated in with many stalls set up in the Genesis Recreation Centre. The WHS stall was manned by a roster of volunteers – Helen Simonsen, Judy Cameron, Vicki Pickering, Catherine Graydon, Christine Paul, Val Richardson and myself, with Rosa checking in to see if more help was required. Thank you all and hope I haven't forgotten anyone! A good crowd there, and despite not many people wanting to take any herbs away I believe we received \$30 or so in donations (bookmarks, scented bags, recipe book) and quite a few potential new members. A worthwhile day to further establish our presence in the Wairarapa.

Andra Bramwell.

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.

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 are 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: Debbie Dittmer, Agnes Jones, Val Richardson, Andra Bramwell, Christine Paul, Bill Edginton, Shelah Agnew, Lorraine Erith.

Officers: Chairperson: Debbie Dittmer; Secretary: Agnes Jones; Treasurer: Val Richardson; Publicity: Andra Bramwell; Newsletter: Bill Edginton; Library: Lorraine Erith.