

Chamomile

October 2016

Recent Outings



Parkvale Mushroom Factory

by Vickie Pickering

Parkvale is 50 years old. A very small group visited the Parkvale mushroom factory on Saturday, 3 September 2016. We were given a guided tour and learned about not only the process of growing mushrooms but the soil required. On an interesting note, it is basically chicken manure with added extras. Afterwards we sat in the factory tea room and enjoyed a cuppa and chat. We were able to purchase mushrooms at the end of the tour, including buckets to so you could grow your own mushrooms.



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Meetings of the Wairarapa Herb Society are held on the third Tuesday of the month, from 1.30pm to 3.00pm, Senior Citizens Hall, High Street North, Carterton



The Wairarapa Herb Society
P O Box 42, Masterton

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Presentations

The chili-pepper family

by Sue Laurence

Chili belong to the solanum family which also includes tomato, tobacco, potato and aubergine. There are hundreds of varieties, the most common being *C.annuum* which includes the mild bell pepper as well as the hot types such as cayenne, jalapeno, paprika.

Chilies are relatively easy to grow – remembering that they are suited to a warm climate. They can be grown under glass or in tunnel houses. Outdoors, plants need about six hours of sunlight a day with minimum soil temperatures of 18°C, and a well-drained soil high in organic matter. Chili seeds should be sprinkled on damp soil and covered by a thin layer of soil to germinate, covering with plastic or glass will raise the soil temperature. Germination occurs from 1-3 weeks. Do not let the seed dry out. Re-pot seedlings once they have their second set of leaves and feed with liquid fertiliser. Plant out about 30cm apart once seedlings are big enough (about 15 cm).

Harvesting and storage

Chili heat comes from the compound capsaicin, most of which is found in the white flesh and seeds. A good dose of chili makes you perspire and as this evaporates it has a cooling effect on the skin. By removing the seeds you can greatly reduce the heat while still retaining the flavour. Wearing gloves is advisable if handling chilies; if you do get chili in your



Bishops Crown chili, *Capsicum baccatum* var. *pendulum*.

eyes or consume chili that is too hot, then application of dairy product seems to help.

Keep picking to encourage plants to keep flowering. Harvest at any stage, whether green or red. Chilies freeze well without needing to be blanched. Chili to be dried should be picked at the point of changing to their mature colour and can be strung on thread and hung outside in the sun until fully dried. Chili features in a range of cuisine worldwide.

Health Benefits

Natural pain relief

Topical capsaicin is now a recognised treatment option for osteoarthritis pain. Capsaicin is being studied as an effective treatment for sensory nerve fibre disorders, including pain associated with arthritis, psoriasis, and diabetic neuropathy.

Cardiovascular benefits

Red chili peppers, such as cayenne, have been shown to reduce blood cholesterol, triglyceride levels, and platelet aggregation, while increasing the body's ability to dissolve fibrin, a substance integral to the formation of blood clots. Cultures where hot pepper is used liberally have a much lower rate of heart attack, stroke and pulmonary embolism.

Clear congestion

Capsaicin not only reduces pain, but its peppery heat also stimulates secretions that help

clear mucus from your stuffed-up nose or congested lungs.

Boost immunity

The bright colour of red chili peppers signals its high content of beta-carotene or pro-vitamin A. Often called the anti-infection vitamin, vitamin A is essential for healthy mucous membranes, which line the nasal passages, lungs, intestinal tract and urinary tract and serve as the body's first line of defense against invading pathogens.

Help stop the spread of prostate cancer

Red chili peppers' capsaicin stops the spread of prostate cancer cells through a variety of mechanisms, indicates a study published in the 15 March 2006 issue of *Cancer Research*.

Prevent stomach ulcers

Chili peppers have a bad

(and mistaken) reputation for contributing to stomach ulcers. Not only do they not cause ulcers, they can help prevent them by killing bacteria you may have ingested, while stimulating the cells lining the stomach to secrete protective buffering juices.

Lose weight

All that heat you feel after eating hot chili peppers takes energy and calories to produce. Even sweet red peppers have been found to contain substances that significantly increase thermogenesis (heat production) and oxygen consumption for more than 20 minutes after they are eaten.

Lower risk of Type 2 Diabetes

Making chili pepper a frequently enjoyed spice in your diet could help reduce your risk of hyperinsulinemia (high blood levels of insulin) – a disorder associated with Type 2 Diabetes.

Recipes:

Chili as garden spray

Ingredients:

1/2 cup of fresh chilies
2 cups of water
1 tablespoon of washing up liquid
strainer, muslin or coffee filter to strain solution
spray bottle

How to make:

Mash or chop up your chilies and put in a preserving jar or bowl. Pour over 2 cups of water. Cover and leave to steep overnight. Strain the infusion the next day. Add washing up liquid to strained chili solution. Mix together. Fill spray bottle. Spray plants as soon as pests appear to keep numbers down. Pay particular attention to stems and the under side of leaves. Use only when pests are visible and re-apply after rain. If you don't have fresh chilies you can substitute with

1 tablespoon of Tabasco or hot chili sauce. If you prepare the solution and don't strain it you can use it as a drench around the base of plants to deter ants as well as larger pests such as rabbits and possums.

Infusion for flu or sore throat

Ingredients:

3 chilli
2 tbsp plain salt
1 cup boiling water
1 cup cider vinegar

How to make:

Pound chilli and salt in a mortar or use a food processor to form a paste. Infuse paste with boiling water then strain. Add vinegar once mixture has cooled. Drink half a cup every 2 hours. (From the NZ Chilli Handbook.)



Happy Belly Ferments

by Jo Kempton

Jo is a self-taught user of herbs from Greytown. Experimenting with using herbs has led to greatly improved health for herself, her family, friends and animals.

Her journey with herbs began with using oregano essential oil which she found a powerful remedy to keep her family free from illness during the winter. After wondering if she could make something herself from oregano which was equally powerful, she began making oregano tincture. She now makes oregano, olive leaf and echinacea tinctures. She also brews the fermented probiotic drinks kombucha and water kefir in her registered factory just out of Greytown under the brand Happy Belly Ferments.

Jo enjoys delivering her drinks to her customers' homes and work places around the Wairarapa and is looking to expand into supplying cafés and bars in the near future.

These experiences and a chance meeting lead her to begin collaborating with Heidi Ward-McGrath, owner of VetCare, producing a range of natural herbal health products for animals. These now include herbal tinctures, essential oil blends and probiotic kombucha with herbal infusions for specific animal illnesses.

These products are assisting Wairarapa animals to stay healthy and are now moving on to national distribution. All of the products are available at VetCare in Masterton or Greytown.

Further information can be found at:

www.happybellyferments.co.nz

www.facebook.com/happybellyferments

www.facebook.com/vetcarewairarapa

or contact Jo on 021 151 0914.



Jo Kempton giving a demonstration on making a variety of tinctures, with Debbie Yoi getting some tips on how to make some of the products.

Events

Carterton Farmers Market

by Debbie Dittmer

The Wairarapa Herb Society set up a stall at the Summer Opening Day of the Carterton Farmers Market, 4 September 2016. There was a lot of interest in the Herb Society and our sales table netted us a healthy return of \$80.

Thanks to those who contributed herbs and produces for us to display and sell.

A special thanks to Gail, Christine P, Helen S and Debbie D, for manning the stall and doing a fine job promoting the Society.



Christine P (left) and Debbie D braved the slightly chilly weather to front our first stall at the Carterton Farmers Market.

Daffodil Day

by Debbie Dittmer

The Wairarapa Herb Society set up a stall outside Almo's Books, on the main road in the centre of Carterton on Sunday, 11 September 2016.

Daffodil Day draws a large number of people from all over the region to Carterton, and we were not short on interest in herbs and the Society.

Our sales table, thanks to our members' donations of plants, teas and fresh herbs, resulted in a return of \$91 to the Wairarapa Herb Society.

Thanks Christine V, Vickie, Sue L & Debbie D for being our Herb Society ambassadors on the day.



Vickie P (left) and Debbie D touting their wares at the Daffodil Day Festival in Carterton, outside Almo's Books.

Mitre10 Mega Garden Evening

by Christine Miller

An annual event held by Mitre10 Mega in Masterton, the Garden Evening on Thursday, 6 October 2016, drew in a good crowd of around 100 or so people to check out what was on offer, competitions, and discounts.

Thanks to Lorraine E, Helen S and Christine M who were fronting the Wairarapa Herb Society table, which showcased a variety of fresh and dried herbs, some lovely herbal dip made by Christine V (see recipe on page 7) which proved extremely popular with the crowd, and a herbal cheese ball made by Lorraine, also a firm favourite (see recipe on page 7).

The *Herbal, Green and Practical Tips* book published by WHS (otherwise known as "the Green Book" and currently under revision for reprint) generated some interesting questions from visitors, and most people who stopped by our stall took away a leaflet, with a few showing genuine interest in attending a meeting.



Books of the Month

A selection of books now available at Almo's Books

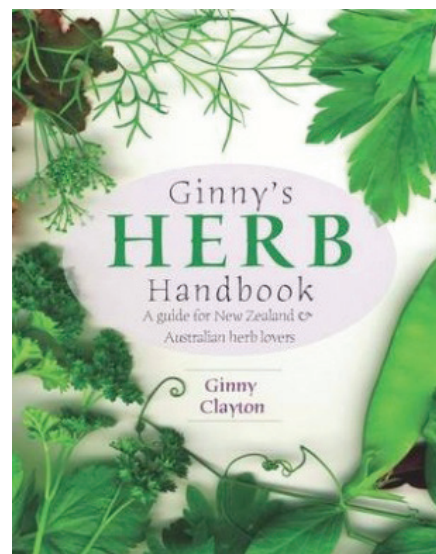


The Good Dirt by Xanthe White \$45

A new book all about the soil in our garden and how we can maximize its growing potential. Xanthe classifies soil into 5 types: clay, fertile (silt, volcanic, loam), sandy, gravel and modified ie container gardening and soils that have had things added such as seaweed, organic manure, compost, mulches. Using lots of examples she gives clear advice in simple language on how to maintain and improve soil, working in harmony with nature. Contains great pictures and suitable for anyone wanting to establish a garden or improve an existing one.

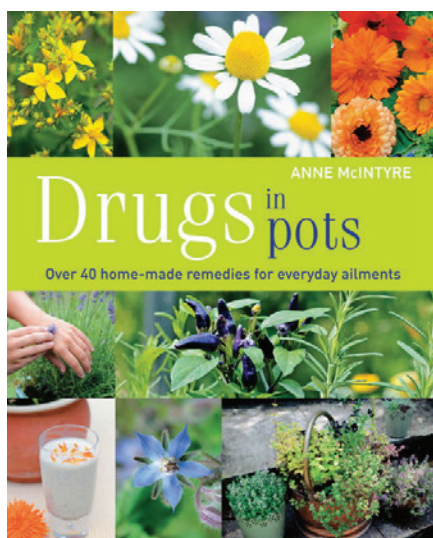
Ginny's Herb Handbook by Ginny Clayton \$24.99

A useful handbook for Australian and NZ gardeners on propagation, maintenance and use of over 60 herbs. Also covers planning your garden and companion planting to either encourage bees or to repel insects.



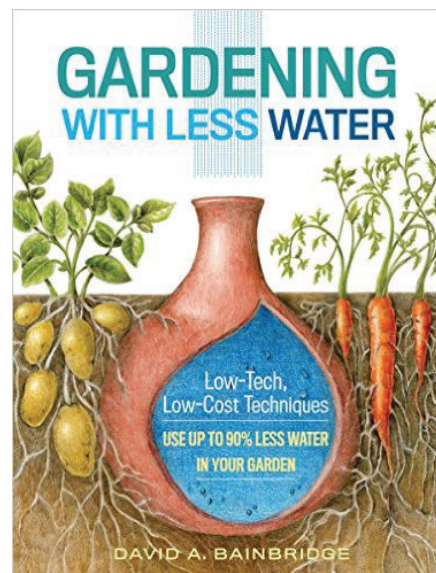
Drugs in Pots by Anne McIntyre \$29.99

Step-by-step instructions show even the novice herbalist how to make a variety of home healers, including tinctures, poultices, compresses, elixirs and teas. A comprehensive directory of over 50 different herbs and plants provides a useful reference tool on how to choose, grow, and heal with herbs.



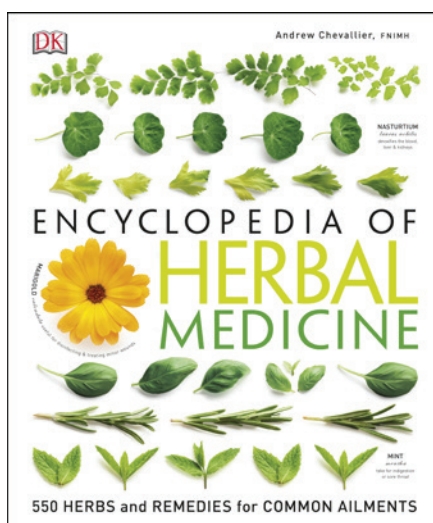
Gardening with Less Water by David Bainbridge \$39.99

Published this year, Gardening with Less Water introduces gardeners to simple low-cost, low-tech techniques-using terracotta pipes, wicks, and recycled plastic bottles-that are up to 10 times more efficient than traditional watering methods. An American book with lots of examples.



Encyclopedia of Herbal Medicine (2016) by Andrew Chevallier \$70

Andrew Chevallier is a fellow of the National Institute of Medical Herbalists, and his Encyclopedia of Herbal Medicine is the unrivalled guide to home healing and herbal medicine. With entries showcasing 550 medicinal herbs and nearly 200 remedy lists, you can learn how to treat a wide variety of common ailments from the comfort of your own home.



DON'T FORGET! A 15% discount is available to Herb Society Members at Almo's Books, Carterton!

Herbal Certificate course

Members of the Wairarapa Herb Society are encouraged to enrol for modules of the Herbal Certificate course offered by the Herb Federation.

WHS will subsidise the \$45 cost of each module for non-individual members of the Federation by \$15. This subsidy brings the cost into line with that for individual Federation members.

Information about the Herbal Certificate course may be found on the Federation's website <http://www.herbs.org.nz/certificate.html>

Those wishing to apply for the WHS subsidy should email Bill Edginton (edginton@actrix.gen.nz) with details of the module they wish to take.



Carterton Community Garden

by Christine Voelker

The Herb Society's goal is to promote the safe use of herbs, and reach out into the community to encourage young people in particular to experience this wonderful natural resource. So when we heard that a community garden had been established in Carterton, we tagged along to get our hands dirty.

Meeting the members of the R2R youth group, organised by its spokesperson Rebecca, was fun and joyful. A trailer load of compost had just been donated from the Parkvale mushroom factory and, with all hands on deck, seedlings were soon planted.

We found a spot for our contribution of herbs and with the help of Daniel from the group got everything nicely labelled.

A herbal dip on bread was offered to the hard workers, including all the enthusiastic littlies.

A great start to form connections with the wider community and hopefully create more herb lovers.



Carterton Community Youth Group Garden, from left Debbie with Rebecca and Christine.



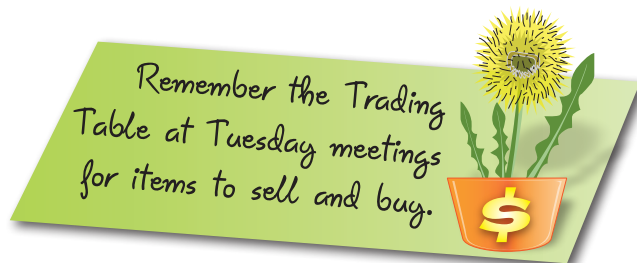
Carterton Community Youth Group Garden members with Daniel, the main helper, in the middle.



Beginnings of the herb garden.

Noticeboard

Meetings & Upcoming Events



October	Saturday – 1 October Lansdowne Nursery.	Tuesday – 18 October Topic: Comfrey 1.30 pm, Senior Citizens Hall, Carterton. Convener: Kathleen McKenzie.
November	Saturday – 5 November South Wairarapa Gardens Tour. Co-ordinator: Carole P	Tuesday – 15 November Topic: Garden Visit 1.30 pm, Senior Citizens Hall, Carterton. Convener: Shelah Agnew.
December	Saturday – 3 December Christmas Function	

Emails will be sent out prior to events containing the relevant details.

Carterton Farmers Market

Following the success of our venture at the Carterton Farmers Market, the WHS Committee is looking for expressions of interest from our members for an opportunity to jointly share a market stall.

Members would sell on their own behalf, herb/plant related products, while promoting the WHS. Stall

manning duties could be rostered from participating members. The cost would be shared between the members involved and the Herb Society.

Please contact Debbie Dittmer debbie.dittmer@wairarapa.dhb.org.nz or phone 027 283 2201 if you are interested or have any questions.

Wairarapa Herb Society Christmas Market

We have many talented members who make and sell herbal goodies and other crafts. This year, in association with the Christmas Function, we will hold a WHS Christmas Market.

Members will be welcome to display their goods/

produce and hopefully make a little money on the side.

Please contact debbie.dittmer@wairarapa.dhb.org.nz or phone 027 283 2201, if interested in participating in the WHS Christmas Market.

Recipes

Feta Dip

by Christine Voelker

1 packet of feta – cow or goat, whatever one likes
juice of one lemon
3 garlic cloves
3 tablespoons of olive oil
a mixture of fresh herbs – I used thyme, rocket leaves, parsley, pinch of rosemary, and some weeds like chickweed and puha

Blend together, and if the mixture gets too sticky, add some more oil.

Olive and Walnut Spread

by Bunny Rathbone

1 cup green olives
1 cup walnuts (or pine nuts)
1/2 cup raisins – plump up by cooking gently in a small amount of water
2 cloves garlic
fresh parsley

Put all the ingredients into a food processor.
Mix until well blended but not too smooth.

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

About us

The Wairarapa Herb Society

(Estab. September 1982 and registered under the Charities Act No. C.C. 29074.) PO Box 42 Masterton.

Objective

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

Meetings

Held on the third Tuesday of the month from 1.30pm to 3.00pm at the Senior Citizens Hall, High Street North, Carterton (opposite Wild Oats Café). As far as possible, Saturday meetings are held on the first Saturday of each month.

Annual Sub

Individual: \$20*; Families: \$30*

*\$5 reduction on subscription if a paid-up member of the Herb Federation.

Quarterly Newsletter – *Chamomile*

All past issues from inception of the Herb Society are in the Wairarapa Archive and also in folders in our own library. Our library copies can be borrowed like any other book. Some members may enjoy reading about the Society's activities in the past.

Trading Post

Items which members wish to advertise within the Society may be listed in the Newsletter upon request to the editor.

Executive Committee 2016-17

Debbie Dittmer, Agnes Jones, Val Richardson, Andra Bramwell, Christine Paul, Bill Edginton, Shelah Agnew, Lorraine Erith, Vicki Pickering, Christine Voelker and Helen Simonsen.

Officers 2016-17

Chairperson: Debbie Dittmer; Secretary: to be appointed; Treasurer: Val Richardson; Publicity: Andra Bramwell; Newsletter: Christine Miller; Library: Lorraine Erith.

Action Groups

Revenues & Finance – Helen and Val; Membership – Christine V and Lorraine; Activities & Events – Vickie, Christine P and Shelah; Communications & Publicity – Andra, Christine M and Daniel.



WAIRARAPA HERB SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM 2016-17

Please print clearly

Name

Address

Postcode Phone Mobile

E-mail

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

Subscription entitles you to *Chamomile* – our quarterly newsletter – giving details of upcoming events, reports and updates of previous events, recipes, herb news and 'herb of the month' summaries. 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 a cheque for **\$20 individual** or **\$30 family** and hand to Val at the meeting or forward to:

WAIRARAPA HERB SOCIETY
TREASURER
PO BOX 42
MASTERTON

