

Chamomile



Objectives

To promote and share knowledge of herbs, their cultivation and use.
Charities Act No. C.C. 29074

Meetings and outings

Meetings of the Wairarapa Herb Society are normally held on the third Tuesday of the month from 1.30 - 3.00 pm at the Old Courthouse in Holloway Street, Carterton.

Note: no meeting in June as we are having the AGM
Outings and field trips take place on a Saturday during the warmer months of the year.

Committee members

Christine Volker - President
Alan Butler - Treasurer
Amanda Hall - Scholarships Co-ordinator, Library
Jenny Dey
Cindy Munn
Sheira Chen

Contact

waiherbs@gmail.com

Keep connected

Facebook

A note from your president

Winter and spring, summer and fall
No matter the season
I love them all
There's always a reason to wake up to and say
" what a lovely season it is today"
(unknown author)

Dear WHS whanau,

As this little poem above indicates , the seasons are to be appreciated even if they are now very much changing. Reports of a late tomato harvests, apple trees starting to flower again and an overall feel that we have to be prepared to adjust our garden skills and work with Mother Nature as she thinks fit in a warming climate.

It's been said that a crisis is also an opportunity. As we recap the WHS sessions in this news letter you can read about individuals who are making a change and using an opportunity to start a sustainable business. Please let the team know if you know of someone who would fit that description and who would like to share their skills with us. Talking about an opportunity arising out of a crisis I'd like you to consider reaching out to your friends or the community to see if they might like to join our wonderful Herb society. There are also scholarships available for certificate courses (see below). This society has delivered herbal knowledge to the community for over 40 years! The **AGM together with our midwinter Xmas celebrations** will be held **on Saturday June 20 at 11.30**. I will be stepping down as chair to make room for a brand new team. It's been an absolute privilege and I am thanking you all for your support.

Ngā mihi

Christine

Welcome to new members

A warm, herby welcome to our new members Jenny O'Donnell, Steff Willmore, Bernadine Norman and Lorraine Erith. It's great to have you as part of our herb community.

Upcoming meetings

9th of May, herb garden tidy-up
(see below for details)

19th of May, 1.30 Old Court House
Carterton

Everything you wanted to know
about Kawakawa with Edith Rolls.

This is also a practical session.

20th of June, 11.30 (venue to be
confirmed)

AGM and Mid-winter lunch

Upcoming outings

No outings planned for winter
(June, July and August)

If you have ideas for meetings or
outings please send an email to us
at waiherbs@gmail.com. We'd love
to hear from you.

Herbs and their uses - a certificate course offered by the Herb Federation of New Zealand

A reminder that we support our members to do individual papers of the Certificate Course. Please let us know if you are keen to do some study (waiherbs@gmail.com), choose a paper, sign up directly with the Herb Federation, and when you have successfully completed the paper let us know and we'll reimburse you. Individual papers cost \$50.

Seed saving and potting up seedlings

A reminder to save seeds and pot up any seedlings that are coming up in your garden. We have an annual herb sale later in the year, usually at Carterton Memorial square. This is our annual fund raising event, so the more herbs the better!



Seed saving

Spare seeds (labeled and dated) can be given to a Committee member who will send them on to the Herb Federation of New Zealand. The Herb Federation provides a useful summary on how to collect seed.



Trading table

Our Trading Table at our monthly meetings is an opportunity to give and take (for a gold coin donation). Money raised goes towards subsidising our outings, as well as other WHS activities.

Bring along your excess fruit, vegetables, herbs and seeds, and you never know what you'll find to take home.

Membership and scholarships

Our membership currently sits at 5 life members and 43 members.

Three of our members are currently being supported through the Herb Federation of New Zealand Certificate course in [Herbs and their uses](#).

Local publications

We aim to publish an article in the Carterton Crier and Midweek newspaper on a regular basis. If you don't receive these publications you can view current and back copies of the Carterton Crier [here](#) and for e-editions of the Midweek click [here](#).

Do you have something to share, swap or sell, or are you looking to source a plant or seeds for your herb garden? Please send your request to waiherbs@gmail.com.

Recent Outings

Our first outing for the year was to a well established lavender farm. Jenny and John Dennis have been growing Grosso Lavender for over 18 years. They produce an amazing oil which has won a gold award for its quality.



Jd's oil is distilled in Martinborough but all the bottling is done on site in Te ore ore Bideford rd north of Masterton.



We were welcomed by refreshments and the owners were very generous with their time. On an otherwise very grey and rainy day the sun came out when we strolled



Herb garden tidy up

The Society's herb garden is located in the Community Garden at Haumanu House, behind the Police Station in Carterton. Everyone is welcome to visit and pick herbs.

A tidy-up meeting should be every third Thursday of the month. Our next working bee will be at 10.30 am on the 9th of May.

Please bring your favourite weeding tool and something to share with a cup of herbal tea.

Marketplace

Le Faye Herbs, based in the Wairarapa sells an artisan blend of herbal brews.



Each tea is uniquely put together to nourish and support the bodies many systems. A range of flowers, seeds roots and spices are used along with locally foraged natural herbs. Our aim is to buy fresh herbs and spices free from chemicals, We have a variety of blends but we are happy to put together a one-off brew just the way you like it.

through the rows of this beautiful lavender, picking a bunch as we went. Purchases of the beautiful oil could be made in the lovely decorated farm shop.





Teas can be purchased directly
(\$18.50) from Lorraine
022 3062145 or mail
lefayeherbs@gmail.com

Teas are also available at the
following outlets / mark up applies
Family organic shop and cafe
Masterton Bin Inn / Masterton

Almo Books discount

Support local! Herb Society
members can enjoy a 10%
discount at Almo Books and Cafe in
Carterton.

Meetings Reports

Pickled Talk by Amanda

18 February 2026

Our first meeting
of the year set
us up with
knowledge on
how to handle
all our food
waste in an
easy hassle free
way - all that is
needed is an air



tight bucket
and inoculated
flakes.

Lydia from
Pickled talked
to us about
handling our
food scraps
through
fermentation.
The anaerobic
fermentation
process uses an inoculant — a special blend of beneficial





microbes (flakes) to ferment all kinds of food scraps minus the pests and odours.

Nearly half of household food waste (48%) includes items that are tricky to compost — bones, shells, baked goods, and cooked/raw expired food. These scraps can create odours, attract pests, and take ages to break down in standard compost piles.

Instead of sending these scraps to the landfill 'Pickled' makes composting EVERYTHING easy.

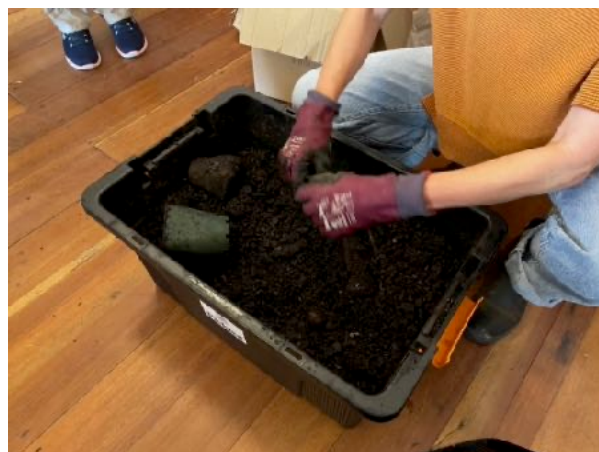
Turning your scraps into valuable nutrients and in a form more readily available to enrich soil and support healthy plant growth.

Once your scraps are 'pickled' they can be transferred to your usual compost heap...it will enhance your compost with helpful microbes which in turn will speed up the composting of the compost heap. Adding your pickled scraps to your compost will not attract vermin.

So how does it work?



1. Save your scraps in a kitchen caddy, chop any bigger bits up
2. Prepare your airtight bucket - add a layer of ripped up cardboard to the base, this will absorb any liquids. Sprinkle in a small handful of flakes.
3. Add your scraps to the bucket. Once a day is good, sprinkle 1-2 Tb spoons over the scraps
4. Use a brick or potato masher to compact the scraps down nice and tight to remove as much air as possible.
5. Continue saving/



adding your scraps with a sprinkling of inoculant to the bucket each time.

6. When the bucket is full leave for a few weeks (or months...it doesn't matter) and ta dah! Your food scraps are now a magical world of wonderful beneficial goodies!

This wholesome goodness can go to your compost or added directly to your soil (dug in) The pickled scraps will continue to break down. You could also feed them to your pigs or chickens!

Head to <https://pickledcompost.com/> to learn more or purchase your kit.

Lighthouse Gin with Rachel Hall

17 March 2026

On a sunny St. Patrick's Day afternoon, Rachel Hall, head distiller for Lighthouse Gin, came and talked us through the botanicals that go into her special gin recipe.



Lighthouse Gin gets its name from the Cape Palliser lighthouse, the only lighthouse in New Zealand (and here in the Wairarapa) with the distinctive red and white stripes.

Rachel became the head distiller for Lighthouse Gin in 2014, and New Zealand's first female distiller. She uses nine botanicals in her recipe, with each botanical playing its part to give the delicious flavour that is Lighthouse Gin. Rachel controls the process from start to finish. Her still is at The Runholder, and she distills gin most days.

Lighthouse Gin is a London Dry gin, which means that it has to have at least 50% juniper berries in the recipe. Add to this, almonds which give it some creaminess, liquorice root for sweetness, cassia bark, cinnamon quills, coriander seeds, navel orange, Yen Ben lemon (the lemony-ist of lemons and zested by hand) and orris root, from *Iris Florentina*, which in powdered form binds all the different flavours together.

All the botanicals go into the still together with a neutral wheat spirit. The spirit that is produced through the distillation process has spring water from Wharekauhau Country Estate in Palliser Bay added to it. Rachel uses this water as it is soft and pure.



Rachel brought her gin for us to taste, and first we tasted the gin neat, then with an ice cube and lastly with a splash of tonic. It was interesting to see how the flavours came through with the different taste methods.

We also heard a little about the Navy Strength and barrel aged gin that Rachel also makes, and we finished our afternoon with a short quiz.

Congratulations to the winner, Laura Hopkins, who took home a small bottle of gin and tonic.



Visit to five Orchards

Report by Christine Volker , pictures by Jenny Dey

The last of the summer wine ...that was a bit of the feeling sitting under these beautiful big oak trees looking at blooming fields of Dahlias. A small group of us made the most of the balmy weather before the predicted cyclone.

Debbie Rautenbach the owner of five orchards took over the land which already had a great



variety of nut trees on site. It was fun to fill bags with walnuts , chestnuts and when in season hazelnuts. The dahlia flower field is absolutely stunning . There are other cut flowers like zinnias available to create wonderful bouquets. Debbie was very generous with her time and as a bonus we ended up taking our own bouquet of flowers home.

If you could not make this outing you can find Debbie on instagram and maybe visit next season.

Recipes

Herbed Potato Salad with Crispy Pancetta

Recommended by Carolyn Peterson

Ingredients

- 1.5 kg Jersey Benne or Perlas potatoes
- 2-3 stalks of celery, leaves chopped and stalks thinly sliced
- 1 red onion, finely diced
- 2 tbsp of olive oil
- 1/2 a cup of whole capers
- 100g sliced pancetta
- Extra herbs to garnish

Green Dressing

- 2 garlic gloves, crushed
- 1 cup whole-egg mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup buttermilk or sour cream
- 1 1/2 cups chopped parsley leaves
- 1/2 cup of chopped tarragon
- 1 cup of chopped mint leaves
- 2 tbsp of lemon juice



Cooking and Assembly

- ◆ Peel potatoes and chop into uniformly sized chunks. Place in a pot, cover with cold water. Bring to the boil over medium heat and boil for 8-10 minutes.
- ◆ Place celery leaves and stalks into a large bowl with the onion. Toss in the potatoes and set aside.
- ◆ To make the dressing, place the garlic, mayonnaise, buttermilk, herbs and lemon juice into a food processor. Process until smooth and season. Add half the dressing to the potatoes and stir gently to coat.
- ◆ Heat a frying pan with the olive oil over medium heat. Add the capers, stir for 2-3 minutes or until the capers blister and become crispy. Drain on a paper towel.
- ◆ Now add the pancetta to the pan, cook for 2-3 minutes or until it crisps up. Tear into bits.
- ◆ To serve, smear remaining dressing onto a platter and top with the potatoes. Garnish with the crispy capers, pancetta and extra herbs.