

June 2026



The Newsletter of the Marlborough Herb Society

The Presidents report from the recent AGM.

Welcome everyone and thank you for coming tonight. It is our 43rd AGM, we have had a busy year mostly calling on our inner resources for our monthly meetings, thanks everyone for their hard work, innovation, ideas, knowledge and skills.

At the last count we have 26 members, 2 associate members and a number keen to join.

A special thank you to Renee and Cathie who are stepping down. This year I am also stepping down after 7 years, not quite getting off the bus, just no longer being the driver. Here is a review of the past year.

June 2025

Soup and accompaniments about 15 Herbies met at Annette's warm and inviting home and shared 7 soups, all delicious all different and selections of breads, dips, crackers etc HOM homage to Artichoke, even Artichoke poems

July

Dinner at SASA Around 16 gathered for delightful Japanese/Korean fusion platters, which arrived, hot, on time and kept on coming.

August

Soap making Kris cleverly demonstrated a small batch of Lemongrass soap. HOM Lemongrass

September

Annette on Spices Garam masala and golden Milk spices and recipes were shared around; we all took home spice packets to try.

We sampled delicious Golden Milk and Cauliflower Turmeric Soup. **Recipes below.**

Kris kindly shared out the now cured, beautifully moulded fragrant Lemongrass soaps.

October

Final Preparations for Garden Marlborough Fete.

Hom Elder, Cathie shared her Elderflower Cordial and the more popular Elderflower Liqueur.

November

Garden Marlborough Fete, although there were a lot fewer herbs this year, the Stall was boosted with Vivienne's 150 luscious Basil Plants, and starter packs by Fiona and Kerry. Just a reminder here, if we all attempt to grow at least 6 Herb plants the Fete Stall will be bountiful. It is our fundraiser for the year.

Farmers Market, again Kerry and Fiona rescued the Stall by Potting up their own plants.

December

Picnic at Barewood thanks to Rosie we were treated to a byo picnic on the wide veranda and viewed the amazing potager and surrounding gardens. We arrived too beautifully set tables, thanks to Hannah too, and proceeded to unfurl the many delicious dishes, we even had oysters. We had tastings of a selection of Marathon Downs wines.

February

Our speaker Ben Leggett from Elemental Distillers and Gin Shack took us through the fascinating story behind Bens background and the award winning blue tinged Marlborough Dry Roots Gin which we got to taste. Botanicals include Kawakawa berries, grapefruit, wild yellow gorse flowers, hops, coriander seed and of course Juniper.

HOM Tarata

March

Community Garden potluck supper and cuttings for Propagation led by Vivienne.



April

All things Bonsai Kerry and Fiona demonstrated hands on with pine seedlings how to make a start, we all went home with a shaped pine and hope to return next year with the result. All manner of clever Bonsai plants were displayed, even fruiting plants.

HOM All things Turmeric, thanks to Annette, Turmeric in every form was displayed and again, we were treated to Golden Milk and Cauliflower Turmeric Soup. Recipes available.



May 2026 AGM

Here we are again, intake of our new President, Secretary and committee members.

Catering by the cleverest Annette

HOM Plantain, plant and preserves swap.



UPCOMING

JUNE Soups and accompaniments Linda has kindly offered to host this year Tuesday June 23rd.

40a Parker Street, Blenheim. [details below...](#)

JULY Mid-winter dinner Restaurant Seika Redwoodtown.
July 28th

Other Notes. A huge Thank you to everyone for their work at the Community Gardens this year, it is looking good and important for our Herb Society for Propagation, learning about caring for herbs. We use the Herb Garden as a venue and for learning by experiencing the growth and flourishing of the Herbal varieties we have.

Working Bees 🐝 2nd Saturday of the month
9.00 am -12.00pm. Many hands make light work.



Working Bee and Unveiling of a Teko Teko

On 14th February 2026, a small but dedicated group gathered at the Community Gardens for a working bee to tidy the Herb Society's plots. Although only a couple of volunteers were able to attend, they worked efficiently and with great enthusiasm. Together they refreshed the main garden area, cutting back the herbaceous centrepiece and clearing foliage from the central pathways, leaving the space looking neat and welcoming.



Later that morning, a special unveiling ceremony was held for a newly installed tekoteko — a carved human figure traditionally placed on the gable of a Māori meeting house. This beautiful piece was created by master carver John Mutu and now stands proudly atop one of the entrance posts, overseeing the gardens from his vantage point as visitors arrive. He is adorned with a flax cloak that will weather naturally over time, ageing gracefully alongside the Tekoteko.

The unveiling was attended by approximately 10 to 15 people and was followed by a sumptuous morning tea, providing an opportunity for everyone to gather, reflect, and celebrate this meaningful addition to the gardens.



RECIPES



Recipes

Ginger and Turmeric Cauliflower Soup

This super healthy, immune-boosting Ginger and Turmeric Cauliflower Soup is packed with nutrients and flavour!

It's gluten-free, dairy-free, vegan, and paleo. And so delicious!

- Total Time: 30 min

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 head orange cauliflower, cut into small florets
- 3 carrots, finely chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh ginger, grated
- 1 tablespoon [turmeric powder](#)
- 1/2 teaspoon Kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
- 3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth (or chicken broth)
- 1 (14.5) ounce can [lite coconut milk](#)
- More salt and ground pepper to taste
- Heat the olive oil in a dutch oven or soup pot over medium-high heat. Add the cauliflower florets and chopped carrots and sauté until starting to soften, about 5 minutes. Add in the onion and garlic and sauté another 3 minutes. Stir in the turmeric powder, ginger, salt and pepper.
- Add the vegetable (or chicken) broth and coconut milk to the pot, stirring well. Bring the mixture to a boil, cover, and lower to a simmer for about 15-20 minutes, until the vegetables are soft.

- Using either an immersion blender or high-powered blender, blend until smooth and creamy. You can leave some chunks in for texture. Adjust seasonings.
- Add some coarse ground pepper on top for serving.

Golden Milk (Masala Haldi Doodh)

By [Manali Singh](#)

Golden Milk aka Haldi Doodh is a comforting drink made with milk, turmeric and warm spices. Turmeric's anti-inflammatory properties makes it a perfect drink to have when you are under the weather or just when need a little pick-me-up!

Cook Time: 10minutes mins

Total Time: 10minutes mins

Ingredients

- 2 1/2 cups milk 20 oz, use milk of choice
- 3/4 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 4 green cardamom pods slightly crushed
- 1/2 inch ginger cut into thin slices
- 5-6 whole black peppercorns
- 1 inch cinnamon stick
- 1 tablespoon sweetener of choice sugar, maple syrup, honey, adjust to taste
- cinnamon or cardamom powder to serve, optional

Instructions

1. Add milk to a pan on medium heat. After a minute or two (when the milk is little lukewarm) add turmeric powder to it.
 2. Then add crushed green cardamom pods, sliced ginger, black peppercorns and cinnamon stick.
 3. Add in the sweetener and whisk it all together and bring to a low simmer for 5 minutes. You don't need to boil it but it should be nicely hot throughout.
 4. Remove pan from heat, cover pan with a plate or lid and let it sit for another 5 minutes for the flavours too steep in. Strain the golden milk using a strainer into serving cups.
- You may sprinkle with cardamom or cinnamon powder before serving.



Cream of Celery and Kumera Soup (Green Soup) **Courtesy of Raewyn Buchanan**

6-7 Stalks of celery (about 450gs) including leaves

4-5 Spinach leaves, chopped

250g Kumera, peeled and diced

2 cups Vegetable or Chicken Stock

25g Butter

1 med onion diced

3 tablespoons flour

2 cups milk

Salt and pepper to taste.

Combine the celery, spinach, kumera and stock in a saucepan and simmer until vegetables are soft. Puree until smooth.

Melt the butter in a large saucepan. Saute the onion until tender and stir in the flour. Gradually stir in the milk, cooking on low heat, until thick. Slowly stir the puree into the white sauce.

Season to taste. Heat through.

Great if feeling full of cold or flu.

Herb Awareness Month March 2026

The herbs for 2026 are:

- [Burdock - *Arctium lappa*](#)
- [Self-Heal - *Prunella vulgaris*](#)
- [Tarata - *Pittosporum eugenoides*](#)
- [Turmeric - *Curcuma longa*](#)

BURDOCK – ARCTIUM LAPPA

Skin diseases are conditions in which Burdock has gained a reputation” *King’s Dispensatory, 1898*

Identification & Cultivation: Burdock is in the Asteraceae family.

Originally from Europe, it is now found growing around the globe typically in disturbed soils, along roadsides, and in paddocks. It is classified as a noxious weed as its prickly heads are notorious for catching on clothing and ruining sheep fleeces. It is a biennial and so completes in life cycle in two years, dying down in winter as part of this cycle. In the first year Burdock forms a large low lying basal rosette. The large coarse leaves are ovate or triangular, green with sparse hairs on top and whitish with dense hairs underneath. They can be up to 2 feet wide and 1.5 feet across. In the second year the plant produces a sturdy stalk up to 9 feet tall. The prickly composite

flower heads are composed of reddish-purple florets surrounded by bracts with inward-turning tiny hooks. The round seed heads are light brown in colour and bristly. Much of the medicine is contained within the large fleshy root which can reach 4 feet in friable soils. The roots help break up compacted land and transfer deeply held minerals to the leaves. It is a drought tender and frost-resistant species that grows well in sun or partial shade.

Parts used: Roots, seeds, leaves and stalks. The roots are harvested in the autumn of the first year and in spring of the second year prior to the production of flower stems. Leaves are harvested in the first year or prior to flowering. Burdock reproduces by seed and one plant can produce approximately 1500!

The seeds are collected after the burrs have dried and turned brown.

Character: Burdock is characterised as bitter, and sweet (particularly the mucilaginous root). Energetically cooling with the capacity to dry or moisten.

Constituents: This species has a rich constituent profile in large part due to its deep root action. The root contains up to 45% inulin (a prebiotic), plus chlorogenic acid, mucilage, sulfurous acetylene compounds, polyacetylenes and bitter guaianolide-type constituents. Nutritional constituents of note include vitamins A, B1 and B2, C, E and P along with the minerals iron, copper, calcium, iodine, silicon, sulphur and zinc.

Therapeutic Actions: Perhaps most highly regarded for its alterative and depurative actions to open and improve the elimination channels of the lymphatics, kidneys (it's a diuretic), liver (it's a hepatic and so strengthens, tones and stimulates bile secretions) and skin zone. It is also an antimicrobial, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and nutritive. The seeds also have a diaphoretic and hypoglycaemic action.

Medicinal uses: a perfect motto for Burdock could well be 'slow and steady'. This herb is typically used at a low-moderate dose over a long period of time to support chronic skin conditions including eczema, psoriasis, acne and boils. Inflammatory joint conditions such as arthritis are another common use of this herb. One study of a group of people with osteoarthritis, reported significant lowered levels of C-reactive protein, an inflammatory marker, after 42 days of drinking Burdock tea.

The fresh root is a significant source of inulin, a prebiotic fibre that serves as food for beneficial bacteria in the gut microbiome.

Whenever the microbiome is supported, the therapeutic benefits are wide reaching including to the immune and nervous systems.

Burdock was included in two famous cancer-supportive remedies in the 1920's, the Essaic and Huxley formulae.

Burdock is still used today to support this chronic disease as science continues to identify anti-tumor activity within the plant, including through the constituents, arctiin and arctigenin.

Research indicates the root has gastro-protective properties and so is considered for inflammatory conditions such as peptic ulcers and acid-reflux.

This action is attributed to the high mucilage and inulin content, plus various antioxidants.

The roots of Burdock are commonly eaten as a vegetable throughout Asia, Brazil and Portugal/Europe where it is respected for its diuretic effects, plus as a general support to the digestive system. It can be used topically to support skin conditions via a decoction of its root or leaf tea and applied as a compress, or as a leaf poultice.

Dosage: Burdock is considered a safe herb, however due to a lack of research on its safety, burdock extracts are not recommended during pregnancy/ breastfeeding and for those on anti-platelet and anti-coagulant medications. The root can be dried or used fresh to include in the diet.

Three times daily: Decoction of dried root: 2-6gm Infusion of dried leaf – 2-6gm Fluid extract (25%) – 2-8mls Water based preparations such as infusions and decoctions are best when wanting the depurative and urinary supportive benefits.

Other Uses: It has been used by traditional healers in Brazil to treat AIDS. The large leaves of burdock were once used to wrap and store butter. Burdock is often paired with Dandelion (*Taraxacum* spp.) for a synergistic action.

History & Mystery: It is mistakenly thought that the burrs of Burdock were the inspiration for Velcro, but this was actually the cocklebur plant (*Xanthium* spp.). Lose a button while out walking? Try Burdock's burrs as a makeshift version! As part of learning to co-exist with this important medicinal species, when you have enough plants remember to remove the seed heads before they mature. The flowers are mainly pollinated by bumblebees and honeybees. Birds can get caught in the burrs when feeding on the seeds and insects within the seeds – another good reason to remove the seed head.

References: 1.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267515411_Effects_of_Arctium_lappa_L_Burdock_root_tea_o

[n_inflammatory_status_and_oxidative_stress_in_patients_with_knee_osteoarthritis](https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5880935/) 2.

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5880935/>

3. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877860710600100>

Prepared for the Herb Federation of New Zealand's Herb Awareness Month 2026 by Cathryn Neale. Enquiries: www.herbs.org.nz Advisory Note: This text is given as a general guidance. If any adverse reactions occur or symptoms persist, please contact a qualified medical herbalist or medical doctor immediately



WHATS ON THIS SEASON

Tuesday 23rd June 2026 – Soup Night

Venue: Linda Davies – 40a Parker Street

Time: 6.00pm

Details: Please join us for a delicious supper, bring a soup 🍲 , 🍞 bread, crackers, any other accompaniments and cake to share. Bring cup/bowl, plate, spoon etc.

6pm at Linda's lovely home 40A Parker Street. Blenheim.

Please Park on the street, parking is limited so carpooling is recommended.

Please RSVP as we need to know numbers.

Bring a poem a haiku or a song.

HOM Burdock. there is a very good article about Burdock and the herbs we have studied recently in the latest HFNZ newsletter.

HOM: Burdock

Tuesday 28th July 2026 – Mid winter meal

Venue: Zaika Restaurant & Bar

See here for the menu: <https://zaika.co.nz/>

Time: 6.00pm

Details: Please email mhsgarlicpress@gmail.com to RSVP

Tuesday 25th August 2026

Venue: Marlborough Art Society Rooms – 204 High Street
Time: 7.00pm
Details: Speaker Joanna Hepburn – Topic: Rubbings
HOM: Lemon scented Herbs

Tuesday 22th September 2026

Venue: Marlborough Art Society Rooms – 204 High Street
Time: 7.00pm
Details: Speaker: Fiona Rogers – Topic: Fire Cider
HOM: TBA

Tuesday 27th October 2026

Venue: Marlborough Art Society Rooms – 204 High Street
Time: 7.00pm
Details: Speaker: TBA
HOM: Self Heal

November 8th 2026 Garden Marlborough

Details to come. But please propagate, divide or plant the herbs for our Garden Marlborough Stall. It is the fund raiser for the year. Which helps the group to have great speakers and interesting experiences during the year.

Committee Details:

President:	Kerry Rogers	021 0895 1092
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Secretary		
Librarian:	Francie Ryder	
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