



CHAMOMILE February 2014

Notice Board

February

Saturday, 8th. Helen Wilson – Lavender Farm, 1453 Castlepoint Rd. Meet at 11.30am at Mobil Service Station, corner of SH2 and Te Ore Ore Rd. Shared lunch at noon at Lavender Farm. Bring own outdoor chairs. Lavender products for sale. Afternoon tea nearby at Rosa Vallance's house, Te Kanuka Station.

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

The complete programme and also a list of conveners for 2014 are attached.

Herb Federation Conference 2013 – Nelson (Report from Andra Bramwell)



Having never been to a conference, or to Nelson I decided it would be a great opportunity to tag along with WHS member Rosa, a seasoned attendee of HFNZ conferences, and enjoy a taste of Nelson. Had a wonderful time, sharing rooms with Rosa and Liz (from Dunedin), although Rosa may reserve comment on snoring and sleep talking!

Left: Rosa and Liz enjoying the sun at "Gardens of the world" Nelson.

Friday evening involved a get-together - a 'WOW' event dressing a member of each group in an array of greenery, and presenting with a catwalk commentary, very ably written and orated for our group by Marilyn Wightman. Judging of the various competitions, all including the herb of the conference, the grape, also took place, with Rosa's wonderful chutney narrowly missing 1st place due to the inclusion of grape seed (left in for texture). I won 'Ode to the Grape' (*text attached - Ed.*) but only 3 entries so not a great accomplishment.

After an early trip to the Saturday Nelson market the morning conference was full of talks and discussions, mainly herbal journeys, including the story of the establishment of "Fossil Ridge", a family enterprise resulting in an organic vineyard, olive grove, macadamia orchard and summer café; a ginseng grower and lavender grower. In the afternoon we attended workshops of choice with a wide variety including establishment of a food forest based on permaculture principles, herbal first aid, herbal crafts, aromatherapy and funky cooking. The day concluded with a very nice dinner and interesting speaker.

Sunday we took a bus trip to an interesting mix of gardens, lowland forest and Waimea estuary.

I found the post-conference bus trip on Monday of great interest with a visit to Seresin Estate in Marlborough. Established by Michael Seresin, a filmmaker (Midnight Express, Gravity), the vineyard and olive grove is both organic and biodynamic (certification from Biogrow and Demeter). Following the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, biodynamics is respect and care of the soil creating balance of health in soil and plants by working with the natural elements. Along with composting, worm farms and natural fertilizers and sprays are the various preparations of cow manure and silica. Spraying of liquid fertilizers is by way of one horsepower (Clydesdale drawn) sprayer which neatly fits between rows of grapes.

The 3 vineyards are planted with a variety of grapes which are handpicked, hand sorted and whole bunch pressed. They are naturally fermented using wild yeasts indigenous to the winery. There is a large olive grove and the estate also produces infused olive oils and vinegars, as well as an extensive orchard and vegetable garden, cows, sheep, and chickens, providing self sufficiency for all workers. As with other organic ventures the Seresin operation is labour intensive and makes good use of workers sourced through WWOOFers – worldwide organization of organic farm workers. So if you have an interest in organics/biodynamics and wine the Seresin Estate is well worth a visit – but be warned the wine is quite expensive!



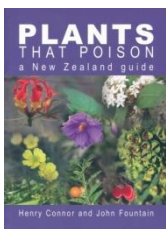
Above: Rosa and co absorbing biodynamics at Seresin Testate.
Right: Rosa photographing 1 horsepower sprayer at Seresin Estate

Award of Life Membership

Life Membership has been conferred on Agnes and Bob Jones, in recognition of the outstanding contribution they have made to the Wairarapa Herb Society over many years. Agnes joined the Society in 1992 and very soon went on the committee. Rosa remembers her diligently taking notes in the minute book. Agnes worked very hard to keep the group going as there was no chairperson. After May became Chair, Agnes continued on as Secretary and has done the job since. She has threatened to resign a few times but gave in when May said she couldn't do without her, as one who was always ready to write the right words for anything to be done or sent.

Agnes attended her first Biennial Herb Federation Conference in 1999, in Taupo. She attended another Herb Federation Conference in 2011, in Tauranga. She has provided thoughtful book reviews at our meetings and her research for Herb of the Month has always made for pleasurable and interesting listening. She has also entertained us with her poems and wit. It was mentioned in Bev Wood's recent book review that women in Renaissance Italy put drops of Deadly Nightshade, Atropa Belladonna, in their eyes to enlarge their pupils but this unfortunately caused blurred vision for a week or more. Agnes quipped 'they wouldn't see what they were getting, would they!'

Agnes has been ably supported in the Society's activities by her husband Bob. A recent example was securing our new library cupboard to the wall of our meeting venue, to prevent it toppling in a quake. It was appropriate, then, to make Bob a Life Member, along with Agnes.



Book Review (November: Bev Wood) Plants that Poison. A New Zealand Guide. By Henry Connor and John Fountain.

This guide includes a selection of plants and mushrooms with some toxic properties that can be found in backyards, public gardens, school playgrounds, on roadsides and in waste ground. The emphasis is on safety through education to help you understand the risks so that you can avoid them. There is advice on what to do if you think that you or your child have eaten something poisonous, and a selection of toxic mechanisms, how the poisons act on the human body, and the treatment that is likely to be necessary. The book is enlivened with historical background, interesting folklore and photographs.

Plant toxins act within the human body and remedial action is required if poisoning occurs. Many plants are poisonous to humans and animals, particularly to children. This book contains many coloured photos to identify problem plants, especially their berries, pods and seeds. Berries are attractive in the garden, but children can so easily put them in their mouths.

After a poisoning scare the initial reaction has been to remove the plants from our gardens and schools. However, many of these plants are enjoyed for their beauty and food value, and their removal would be detrimental to horticulture and home gardens. Even the potato uncooked is poisonous and the green parts caused by exposure to light, are poisonous despite cooking.

It is important to promote awareness of poisonous plants and to respond if they are accidentally consumed or brushed against. The National Poisons Centre is open 24/7 free phone 0800 764 766 for any information required.

Fruits all contain seeds, either in their fleshy pulp or, like the peach and karaka, inside a hard stone. The book groups plants as berries and fruits, pods and their seeds, herbaceous plants, and trees and shrubs. The toxic mechanisms are described to help with defining symptoms, and there are sections on mushrooms and plants that sting and cause dermatitis.

(Bev gave a number of examples of poisons from plants and ways in which they may affect one - Ed.)

Herbs for a Broken Wrist

At our December meeting, **May Brown** spoke about the herbal remedies she had used after breaking her wrist in a fall. 'Arnica,' she said, 'is the first thing to think of after an accident. I carry it in my handbag. I took two 200c tablets. Arnica will help with bleeding, bruising and shock. Arnica Montana is the full name and it comes in tablet, liquid and cream form. It is anti-inflammatory and increases the re-absorption of internal bleeding. It helps reduce pain and promotes healing. after the initial dose, I took doses of 30c four times daily for 3 days. Do not overdose on any homeopathic remedies - usually three days is sufficient.'

'After I had confirmed that the bones had set correctly (which for me required surgery to get the bones properly together), I took Symphytum (Comfrey or Bone Knit), a well known remedy to knit the bones together. Lay the leaves directly on the skin - warm them up first if you prefer. I could not do this so took the pill form - 30c strength.

Lastly, because of the swelling in my arm, hand and fingers, I took Hamamelis (Witch Hazel). this has reduced the swelling a lot, but I still have a way to go.



During the whole of this procedure I took Hypericum (St John's Wort). This was for nerve end pain. In fact I nearly lived on it. A tip is to drop a tablet into a sipper bottle.

Then finally once the plaster was removed (one week early because the bones had knit so well), I used Calendula cream to heal the two holes where the pins were taken out.'

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 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.

Ode to the Grape

An ode is just a poem, a poem that should be sung.
But if I were to sing to you I'd probably be hung.
So I'll try with rhyming couplets, they have a bit of beat.
And maybe I'll make music by tapping with my feet.

Oh let us sing the praises of the common grape, the vine,
It's certainly not common, the grape is just sublime.
Those gorgeous, shiny globes hang together in tight bunches,
They're just the food for supper, or for communal lunches.
The mouth begins to water as you place each grape within,
And when the teeth those balls do burst, juice dribbles down the chin.

The grape is so diverse that the ways with it are many.
It's been so well recorded that books on it are plenty.
The uses have been known throughout all bygone ages,
Just open any history book and thumb through several pages.
Think of Greek god Bacchus lounging in his chair,
A bunch of grapes in one hand, a wreath of ivy in his hair.
He lies there looking happy, wine within a glass he twirls,
Surrounded by a throng of slender, gorgeous looking girls.

Now the flesh of grapes is wonderful and so good for your health,
But once you get the juice out – that's where there's real wealth.
First the grapes you press them, ferment the liquid for some time,
It may take many, many months to convert that juice to wine.
To appreciate quite fully wine's unique and special flavour
Each sip you swallow slowly, each drop the best to savour.
It may be that you recognize one flavour, or maybe some.
Be it strawberry or citrus, cinnamon or plum.

And so I sip, and sip some more – this really is a blast...
How come I'm lying on the floor – can't recollect the past.
But before my eyes start closing, and I slumber, start to snore
I'll raise myself and pour a glass, I promise just one more.

Now let us be upstanding,
And to each a glass be handing
And raise the glass and make a toast
To the herb that really has the most
To Vitis vinifera

THE GRAPE

(by Andra Bramwell)

Wairarapa Herb Society

Saturday Programme 2014

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29th March AGM 1.30pm – Diane Grant's house. Ranginui, Chamberlain Road, Masterton (balloons on gate). Shared afternoon tea.

12th April Di Batchelor – Fungi Walk. Mount Holdsworth. (Details will be provided shortly).

3rd May Tidsfordriv Garden 1.30pm – \$5.00 pp entry. Bring small plate for afternoon tea.

7th June Mid Winter Lunch – Gladstone Pub. Meet at Pub at 11.30am for drinks, lunch at noon.

5th July Marnie Rutherford – Soap Making. Held at Marnie's house in Carterton. This Workshop costs \$35.00 pp, which includes:

Mimimum 4 hours tuition

All materials needed to make the soap.

Handouts to take home with soap recipes.

Morning tea.

Disposable gloves to protect hands.

Take home soap.

2nd August Rosa Vallance – Working Bee at Rosa's., Making Samples of Herb Products for Aging With Attitude Expo.

6th September Botanic Gardens and Home of Compassion, Wellington. A full day trip. Visiting a herb garden, Maori medicinal garden, lunch at Botanic Gardens Cafe. Afternoon at Home of Compassion gardens at Island Bay.

11th October Heavenly Herbs, Lower Hutt, at 2.00pm. And possibly a morning visit to Donna Lee's 'Cottage Hill Herbs' shop, Birchville, Upper Hutt.

2nd November Claire Bleakley – Creams and Smellie for Christmas. 10.30am Sunday at Featherston. Shared lunch.

6th December Christmas Lunch. Details later.

WAIRARAPA HERB SOCIETY

2014 Tuesday Meetings

Conveners

18 th February	Shelah Agnew
18 th March	Debbie Dittmer
15 th April	Lyn Tomlinson (talk by Anita Baker)
20 th May	Bev Wood
17 th June	Di Grant
10 th July	Glenis de Castro
19 th August	Leonne Morris
16 th September	Christine Paul – Open Day
21 st October	Catherine Graydon
18 th November	Andra Bramwell