



The Herb Age



FEBRUARY/MARCH 2020

NO 419



“The Herb Garden has many plants with highly fragrant flowers or leaves, which make it a sweetly scented place to visit at any time of the year.”

THE HERB SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC

PO Box 396, Camberwell, Victoria, 3124, Australia

ABN 22 261 579 261

Bank Details: BSB 633000 / Account 158914432



Like us on
Facebook

www.herbsocietyvic.org.au

www.facebook.com/herbsocietyvic/

Meetup group: www.meetup.com/Herb-Society-of-Victoria/

AIMS OF THE SOCIETY

- ☼ To act as a forum for all persons interested in herbs for their mutual benefit and fellowship.
- ☼ To further the education of the public in the use, value and growing of herbs.
- ☼ To promote and encourage the organic growing of herbal plants.

Patron: Penny Woodward

HSOV COMMITTEE

President & The Herb Age Editor	Meridith Hutchinson
Past President	Robin Calabrese
Vice President	Vacant
Committee Secretary	Vacant
Treasurer	Carmen Hollway
Committee	Jill Bryant
Committee	June Valentine
Committee	Jan Illingworth
Committee	Heather Davies
Committee and Library Coordinator	Marie Baker
Membership Officer	Neville Kelly

HSOV MEETINGS

General meeting

is on the first Thursday of every month, from February to December, open 7.00pm for 7.30pm start.

At: Room MB10 Main Building. Burnley Horticultural College campus, 500 Yarra Blvd Richmond MelRef: 45 A12

Next Meetings: See Page 4

The Hills Branch

meets on the third Wednesday of the month from February to November at 7.45pm at various locations.

Volunteers Welcome for Tussie Mussie Making

Tussie Mussie posies are made by HSOV members at a market stall to support the Collingwood Children's farm.

On the mornings of the Second Saturday of the month at the Collingwood Children's Farm Market, St Heliers Street, Abbotsford. MelRef 44 G5.

Advertising Rates	Quarter page	\$15.00	Half page	\$25.00	Full page	\$45.00
--------------------------	--------------	---------	-----------	---------	-----------	---------

Payment should be sent to the Treasurer at the Society's address above. Advertising copy to be sent to the Editor by page 3 deadline dates.

THE HERB AGE

*Official Newsletter of the
Herb Society of Victoria*

Six issues published per year, covering:

- ✿ February/March
- ✿ April/May
- ✿ June/July
- ✿ August/September
- ✿ October/November
- ✿ December

Members' original contributions are warmly welcomed.

Post to:

Meridith Hutchinson
The Editor, The Herb Age
9 James St
Abbotsford 3067

Email to

theherbage@outlook.com

Deadline for next issue:

Emailed and posted articles
Wednesday 4th March 2020

The views expressed by the contributors to this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Committee of the Herb Society of Victoria, Inc.

While every effort is made to publish reliable information, the use of that information is at the discretion of the individual. The Herb Society of Victoria, Inc takes no responsibility for statements made or opinions expressed.

The Herb Society of Victoria Inc does not offer treatment advice for medical conditions.

*THE HERB AGE is printed by
Apple Print
702 High Street Road
Glen Waverley 3150
Phone: 9887 9496*

© Copyright 2020 by
The Herb Society of Victoria, Inc

THE HERB AGE

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2020

Contents

	Page
Our Next Meeting Details	4
President's report <i>by Meridith Hutchinson</i>	5
February 2020 Outing and Lunch <i>by Graham Ellis</i>	6
March 2020 Outing and Lunch <i>by Graham Ellis</i>	7
Herb Garden Tour <i>By Jan Rosenberg</i>	8
Apologies	9
Edward Bach and his Flower Essences	10
Remember the Bees <i>by Colline Muir</i>	12
Home Grown Pride	12
<i>What Herb am I?</i>	12
Indigenous Food crops <i>by Meridith Hutchinson</i>	13
President's Report (cont.)	14
Tea Roster	15

Cover Pic and Quote:

Bright and brilliant poppies at the Herb Garden at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, taken by Heather Davies at the November walk and talk. See more on the report on page 8. The quote is from the RBG website, about the Herb Garden.



Our Next Meeting



Burnley Horticultural College Campus
and Gardens, Burnley Mel Ref 45 A12

Parking inside the grounds is limited so, if possible
please park on Yarra Blvd and walk in.

Thursday, 6th February 2020
New Year PICNIC MEETING

From 6.00 pm
BYO Picnic to Share

At the Sugar Gum Tree Table Near the herb garden
(or in our general meeting room MB10 if poor weather)

From 7.15 pm
Garden Tour

Picnic to be followed by a tour of nearby garden areas
by FOBG tour guide and HSOV member, Robin Calabrese.



Thursday, 5th March 2020

General Meeting
Please be seated 7.15 for 7.30 pm Start

Please bring a plate of supper per car to share after the general
meeting.

Guest Speaker: June Valentine
Topic: Spice It Up

*HSOV member, June Valentine always delivers a fun and well researched
presentation and this should prove to be no exception.*

President's Report

My sister in law told me that 2020 is numerologically a year 1, meaning it is a year of new beginnings. For some around the nation those new beginnings have been forced upon them as they come to terms with the devastation of this bushfire season. Who has not been impacted? From those in the midst of the fire zones, fighting it or dealing with the trauma of not knowing if their friends and families are ok, their home still stands, or even how to get basic provisions to get through another day; to those like myself on the fringes, watching this horror unfold and dealing with the fallout in the form of smoke from thousands of kms away. I am sure I speak for the whole of the Herb Society of Victoria, when I say that our hearts go out to all those who have been affected. Our prayers and wishes for healing to people, animals, bush and land.

My hubby, James and I got a small insight into this, as we had holiday plans for mid December booked months ago. My work Christmas party was in Sydney and we took the opportunity for a planned road trip. As I sipped champagne on a tall ship on that magnificent harbour, James drove up to meet me the next day at the foot of the Blue Mountains, for what was meant to be a lovely stay near Sydney and the Central Coast. We cancelled some of the trip before we left home, but we did go to the Blue Mountains, somewhat cautiously, constantly checking the hotel and the 'NSW Fires Near Me' websites.



We stayed at the famous Hydro Majestic which overlooks the mountains; barely a dozen guests there in what would normally be peak time for them. Our first night was very smoky, but the winds change constantly there and the second night was very clear. With the black of the night, we could easily see the fire on the opposite mountain, like a red scar from bottom to top, working its way across the side of it. It made us think how could anyone fight this fire, so remote and such a large fire front, but this was one of the smaller and low priority ones affecting the state. The pic taken at sunrise was one of the clearer moments with a little smoke gathered in the valley.



We also cautiously made our way to Jenolan Caves. By then accommodation was closed, but caves tours and some small walks were still open. Once again there were eerily few tourists there, while many cave tours were cancelled as half their staff were out in local brigades fighting fires. A few days later, the road and complex had been closed. Two weeks later in early January, the World Heritage site was under immediate threat, with a few outer buildings destroyed, but fortunately the main site was saved due to heroic efforts.

Continued page 14

February 2020 Outing and Lunch

Wednesday 12 February

Visit St Vincent Gardens, Albert Park, adjacent Heritage terrace houses

Lunch Lavender Café at 19 Victoria Ave

Meet at 10:00 am, at the corner of St Vincent Place South and Montague Streets in Albert Park, Melway 2K A5.

From meeting point, we will walk in a north-east direction (towards the sun) to admire the two-storey terrace houses that look out onto the Gardens. This will take us to Ferrars St from where we shall enter the Gardens.



St Vincent Gardens has been established for about 150 years and provides wonderful specimens of many European and Asian plants. There are large healthy trees of oaks, elms, jacaranda and Golden Rain Tree. Favourite bushes include Plectranthus, Fuchsia and Smoke Bushes. Perovskia, Monstera, Artemisia and Heliotrope populate the display beds which also house Iris, Ginger and Dahlia plants. There are two substantial productive orange trees. As you can see the range of plants is quite extensive. The Gardens is maintained to a high standard.

We can wander around this extensive public garden at our leisure and enjoy the extensive shade from many mature trees. After we complete our tour we will head nearby for lunch.

Lavender Café at 19 Victoria Ave has both indoor and outdoor tables under cover. Some options at lunch are:

- Poached Fruit: Rhubarb with apple, served with yoghurt and berries \$10.50
- Marinated Chicken with Asian coleslaw and spicy guacamole on Turkish bread \$14
- Nutritious Bowl: Kidney beans, Edamame, cherry tomatoes, capsicum, spanish onion, spinach, balsamic dressing \$13.50



Transport is Tram 1 to Stop 28 (with a short walk back along the tram route to our meeting point) or Tram 96 to Stop 128, Albert Park and a short walk. Tram 12 to Stop 132 is nearly as close. Return can be on Tram 1 from the Lavender Café. If you use this tram to arrive and leave your walking distance will be less than 1.5km.

Anyone wishing to swim after lunch can take the Tram 1 several stops out to Albert Park Beach.

Please advise me if you are planning to attend.

Graham Ellis

March 2020 Outing and Lunch, all at St Kilda

Saturday 7 March

Visit Food Plants on Jacka Boulevard
and Farmers Market at Peanut Farm
at Acland St
Lunch on the beach side of the bridge
over Jacka Boulevard.
Meet

From the tram stop, 136 on The Esplanade, take the bridge to move down to the flats beside Jacka Boulevard. We will meet near the beach end of the bridge at 10:00am.

Beside Jacka Boulevard is a planting of **Australian food plants** as used by Aborigines over millennia. Between what members know and my research we should be able to have a discussion about these useful plants. They all are local Melbourne plants so people will be familiar with some of them.



There is a walk of about 800m to reach the Peanut Farm for the **Farmers Market**. A short diversion can show us the refurbished **Palais Theatre** in its new and colourful glory. There will be ample time to peruse the Market and make a selection. The Veg Out Community Garden next door has some rather impressive vegetable crops.

Lunch can be at **Rococo** nearby at 87 Acland St. Items available include

- ◆ Oven roasted field mushrooms with thyme, olive oil, balsamic vinegar, caramellised onion \$11.50
- ◆ A selection of Dips \$12
- ◆ Acai Bowl \$14.50

Transport is **Trams 3A, 16 or 96 to Stop 136**, Melway 2N J7. Walking distance from meeting to lunch is about 1.5km.

After lunch swimming is possible at the beach. **St Kilda Botanic Garden** is also quite close.

This is a **SATURDAY** event.

Please advise me if you are planning to attend..

Graham Ellis



Herb Garden Tour

Herb society tour of the historical herb garden at the RBGM



Curator of the herb garden, Renee Wiezbicki revealed for us the secrets and scents of many of the herbs growing in this amazing historical herb garden.

We meandered down the path dwarfed by a huge Camphor Laurel (leaves are good insect repellent) and massive Bay Tree, (older leaves stronger flavour than young) edged with several fragment pelargoniums. Renee suggested pouring your cake batter onto the geranium leaf of *Calycanthus occidentalis* to give a delicate peppermint flavour. All pelargoniums, flowers and leaves, are edible. (look for the chocolate flavoured one!) *P. californica* is scented like allspice.



The Japanese pepper tree leaves can be infused in oil as a rub for arthritis. Renee warned us of the bright orange sap of Greater Celandine (*Chelidonium majus*) as it burns the skin but has been used as an effective treatment for wart removal. She told us how the ground bark of Cassia is used as an adulterant to “pad” out true cinnamon powder as it is cheaper. We passed a patch of Borage - a popular ingredient used in Italian cooking and marveled at the secret of Foxglove which pharmaceutical companies still use today as an ingredient in heart medication as so far it is unable to be synthesised.

As we approached the central bed built in 1880 by RBG Director Guilfoyle, Renee asked if we could smell the delicate curry scent from the Curry Tree *Escallonia illinita*. The raised brick circular beds are laid out in the traditional European knot style and were originally established as a teaching resource for Melbourne University pharmacy students, as herbs were the ingredients in medicines. Botany developed as a science when accurate identification of herbs became important for medicines formulated from them. The Herb society of Victoria raised money to help restore the neglected garden in 1980 encouraged by Ray Boatman from The Herb Society.



The honeysuckle not wanting to pollinate itself has a cunning plan. White flowers display the stigma only, therefore being receptive to pollination from another plant. As the flowers age and turn brown the stigmas have finished their work and the anther is now prominent to spread its pollen by butterflies and moths to other plants. Clever!

The flax plant produced one small delicate blue flower for us to admire. Many of us were amazed (me included) at how small the flax plant grows given how much linen is prominent in clothing, bed linen, and flax seed used as a nutritional supplement.

An interesting fact is that as we age, we can lose our sense of smell/taste and so put more salt on our food to increase flavour. This is not good for our health and so a mix of herbs can help to boost flavour without damaging health. Pelargonium Mable Grey is used for fibre, dye, in the food industry as tea, flavouring in soup but importantly can also help restore our sense of smell. The science of aromatherapy can play an important part influencing our well being with beautiful aromas.



A prickly plant, the Stinging Nettle should be embraced (carefully). Cooking removes the sting and allows you to enjoy the health giving benefits of Sulphur, Iron and Vitamin C. Chop it up and feed it to your chooks for super powered eggs!



After a welcome cup of lemon myrtle tea Renee and Ellen provided calico squares, boxes of dried rose petals and lavender and raffia to make a small potpourri which we decorated with Bay leaf. What a great idea for Christmas gifts.



Everyone had a very enjoyable morning. Many thanks to Renee for a fascinating and informative talk.

Renee is the curator of the Herb Garden. Peter Syme as the Horticulture Manager at RBGM did attend to assist with his knowledge of the whole Botanic Gardens.

Jan Rosenberg

Apologies

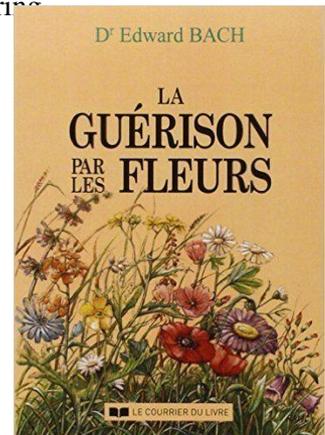
Ed Note: In the last issue I misspelt our departing committee member, Annie Gargano's name. Sincere apologies Annie.



Edward Bach and his Flower Essences

Edward Bach (pictured left) was born in London England in 1886. He died in 1936, aged 50. He studied Medicine and Bacteriology at the London School of Medicine and later Pathology. He became a Surgeon there. Later became dissatisfied with the expectations his profession which treated symptoms of diseases, not the whole person and his or her suffering.

He was inspired by his work with but wished to find remedies that were purer and less reliant on the products of disease. So, in 1930 He gave up his lucrative office in Harley Street, left London determined to focus on a more natural approach to medicine. He decided to leave the scientific basis for this new life. He based his work on his Natural healing instincts. He treated the personalities and emotions of his patients, their unhappiness and physical distress. He believed that their problems could be alleviated when the natural healing potential of their own bodies was unblocked.



In 1934 Dr Bach moved to a quiet country house in Mount Vernon in Oxfordshire. It was in the fields and lanes around his home that he found the remedies he needed. He tried many flowers and plants, on himself, to ascertain the effectiveness of the plant to help his condition. Initially he believed in twelve emotional failings: Doubt, Fear, Grief, Ignorance, Impatience, Indecision, Indifference, Overenthusiasm, Restraint, Restlessness, Terror and Weakness. These he thought were the cause of all human illness. Eventually he decided on thirty-eight flowers and plants to alleviate emotional suffering.

Bach flower remedies are solutions of water containing extreme dilutions of flower material developed by Bach, who claimed that dew found on flower petals retain healing properties of that plant. The remedies are intended primarily for emotional and spiritual conditions. The solutions contain a 50:50 mix of water and brandy plus a very small amount of flower material and is called a mother tincture. Stock remedies are the solutions sold today. used is alcohol, so that the alcohol level by volume in most stock Bach remedies is between 25 and 40 percent of the solutions which are usually further diluted before use, usually into a treatment bottle that contains two drops of one or more stock remedies in water.

Even when his flower remedies numbered on twelve, Dr Bach believed that all disease came from negative emotions or 'failings'. The original twelve failing were:

- | | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| ⊗ Doubt | ⊗ Indifference |
| ⊗ Fear | ⊗ Over Enthusiasm |
| ⊗ Grief | ⊗ Restraint |
| ⊗ Ignorance | ⊗ Restlessness |
| ⊗ Indecision | ⊗ Terror |
| ⊗ Impatience | ⊗ weakness |

The solutions do not have a characteristic scent or taste of the plant because of dilution. The dilution process results in the statistical likelihood that little more than a single molecule may remain, it is claimed that the remedies contain the vibrational nature of the flower which can be transmitted to the use, by the concept of water memory and often labeled as homeopathic. However, sceptics say they are not homeopathy as they do not follow other homeopathic ideas. Systematic reviews of clinical trials of Bach flower solutions have found no efficacy beyond a placebo effect. Nevertheless Bach Flower Remedies are very popular. The Rescue Remedy is available in Pharmacies, Health Food Shops and On Line.

Jill Bryant

					
Agrimony	Aspen	Beech	Centaury	Cerato	Cherry Plum
					
Chestnut Bud	Chicory	Clematis	Crab Apple	Elm	Gentian
					
Gorse	Heather	Holly	Honeysuckle	Hornbeam	Impatiens
					
Larch	Mimulus	Mustard	Oak	Olive	Pine
					
Red Chestnut	Rock Rose	Rock Water	Scleranthus	Star of Bethlehem	Sweet Chestnut
					
Vervain	Vine	Walnut	Water Violet	White Chestnut	Wild Oat
		<p>LAS 38 FLORES DEL DR. EDWARD BACH</p>			
Wild Rose	Willow				



Remember the Bees

You keep your bird baths full on hot days, but remember the bees, too, if you are fortunate enough to still have bees visiting your garden, or have a hive, in which case you know the importance of water to the bee colony. Bees need water to cool the hive and control humidity, and to dilute the honey to the right viscosity. The pollinators need to be looked after.

One way for bees to drink safely, without drowning, is to place a small piece of wet toweling over the edge of the bird bath for bees to land on. In our garden now, the favourite drinking place for bees is the wet soil in some well watered pots. Bees tell each other where to come.

Bees are not the only adult insects to need water. Butterflies like to drink from muddy puddles, or worse. Apparently they are generally males, looking for nitrogen and sodium to help with breeding. Possums too, need water. Never mind if they demolish your favourite plants, you don't want them falling out of the trees and dying on the ground. Bird baths, designed to keep cats at bay, are also not negotiable for possums. Containers at ground level or in a tree are needed. Check frequently for mosquito wrigglers.

I keep a jar of pond water on the bathroom window sill, upstairs. For some years a ringtail possum would come to the open window to drink there. So, let us drink our water, garden folk, one and all.

(As I write, an ant about one millimetre long, is walking over my key board. Wonders never cease!)

Colline Muir



Home grown pride

So who wouldn't be proud of this lovely big bold Garlic, fresh out of the garden. This beauty is from our Treasurer, Carmen Hollway and her community garden plot. Well done Carmen!

What herb am I?

- 5 Points I am a native to Peru, Chile and Argentina
- 4 Points My medicinal properties include relief for nausea, vertigo and indigestion
- 3 Points My botanic name is Aloysia triphylla
- 2 Points My sweet lemon scent and taste lingers a long time.
- 1 Point I'm a favourite tea at Herb Society meetings

I am _ _ _ _ _

Answer page 15

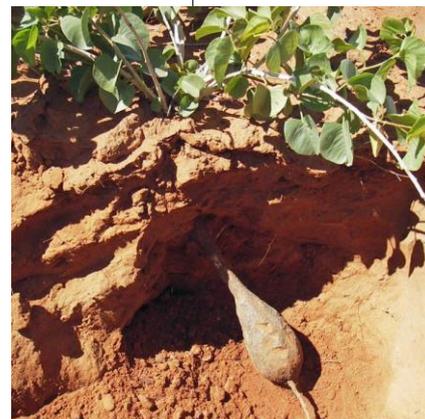


Indigenous Food Crops

Chris Williams was our December speaker on Indigenous food crops, but more specifically the one he is researching, the desert *Ipomoea costata* (pictured right), a native sweet potato. He has spoken previously on the wonderful world of yam and sweet potatoes, but this delicious native species has promise for all our plates. The wine part of the plant looks a bit scrappy but has mauve flowers similar to the native hibiscus.



Papua New Guineans were recognised early on by white settlers, as using agriculture to grow their food; foods we commonly use, like bananas and sugar cane. However, the Australian indigenous peoples were seen as nomadic tribes, using some 'fire stick' agricultural practices to keep clear fields for hunting. But generally, indigenous farming was not understood or acknowledged by white settlers. The effects of assimilation stopped most farming, which flowed onto diminishing local knowledge, so Chris has turned to historical journals from first contact.



One journal by George Grey from expeditions into north west and western Australia, details farming practices in Hutt River area of WA, where there were villagers farmed, harvested and traded the tasty the sweet potatoes and Warran (in the *Dioscorea* species), a type of yam. Although little evidence remains now of the huts, wells and roads, the root foods provided a constant and nutritious food source that enabled complex community systems.



Chris was clearly enthralled with the journal, adding several interesting quotes from it, providing both insight into the times and the vastness of the indigenous diet and agriculture. The book described food sources from animals, fish, birds, roots, leaves, flowers, fruit, nuts, tree gum, seeds and fungus.

With climate change, the search for an easy to grow crop that tolerates desert conditions is becoming more important. There is already a commercial nursery in WA called 'Bush Tucker' which grows the one of the native yam species (Warrine – *Dioscorea hastifolia*) and it should be available in eastern Australia in 2020.

Chris' 'Novel Crops Project' research into this highly nutritious native food source continues. It is easy to cultivate from root or stem cuttings, although difficult from seeds. He hopes that it may be expanded to get Indigenous people involved and expand for agriculture; which will make a great follow up presentation in the future.

I'm sure that will be very welcome, as he had everyone spellbound (right) at this presentation.

Meridith Hutchinson



President's Report continued.....



We decided to go west, as far from the fires as we could, but not the smoke of course and the days got hotter the other side of the Great Dividing Range. We saw “The Dish” at Parkes, and anyone interested in gem stones can find the most amazing collection of gem stones and fossils at Bathurst, including a full size dinosaur skeleton watching over you.

The lass in the shop was so passionate about her charge, that she had bought dinosaur shaped lights for the shop Christmas tree. She even pointed out that she had placed the flashing plastic herbivores from the dinosaur range, so that they were eating bits of the fake tree branches. It was a joy to see someone who loves their job so much that I had to buy something and chose trilobite fossils for my cousin, which he was thrilled with. Win Win.

Despite the heat, we couldn't miss the Japanese Garden at Corowa, which has been set out by renowned Japanese garden architect, Mr Ken Nakajima, over 5 hectares, making it the largest of its kind in the southern hemisphere. They provide a plant list identifying 124 plants, which have been numbered in the garden as you wander through the paths to the open tea house building (with lovely shade and pic left taken through the open window frame) by the lake with ducks and carp.

Plants include a blend of indigenous and oriental, but we were far too late for the spectacle of the many flowering cherries. There were also a number of bonsai, many nearly as old as me (pictured left is *Juniperus Horizontalis*, planted in 1977). There was also an exhibition of artworks, including Netsuke. Netsuke, are centuries old belt toggles; their elaborate carvings showed wealth and status.

Our road trip followed the Silo Art Trail through mid south New South Wales and into Victoria. These works of art on huge wheat silos and water tanks are so impressive. Some are literally in the middle of nowhere, while others are commissioned by towns to tell their story. Like the tiny towns of St James, where CJ Coles was born and continued to support the town during his life, or Devenish with a tribute to its town's military folk and Goorambat, the home of prize winning Clydesdale horses. The Victorian border brought a reprieve from the smoke and it was good to see grass and stock in paddocks again after so many hundreds of kilometers of thirsty, dusty land. Holidays often don't go to plan and bring unexpected experiences and that was certainly true here.



Tea Roster

MARCH

Please help out on the night if you are able

Please bring fresh herbs for the tea pots if possible.

Thank you to all our willing helpers. Your extra effort is very much appreciated.

And so we are at the new year. 2020 is the Year of the Rat, the first year in Chinese horoscope and therefore also a year of new beginnings and renewal. The Herb Society has the Herb Conference planned for October this year, so I'm sure it will prove to be a year for bringing in new friends to our Society.



We kick off the year with the traditional picnic meeting at the Burnley Gardens, so bring along your picnic to share under the shade at the Sugar Gum tree, followed by a tour of one of the many gardens. Robin, as a Friend of Burnley Gardens, is a garden tour leader and has offered to take interested herbies around one of the tours she is acquainted with.

In March we have June Valentine with a new talk on Spices. Anyone who saw her Eucalyptus talk last year will know how entertaining and informative her talks are. I have been given a little preview of parts of it. No spoilers, but it sounds pretty good.

I look forward to a year of renewal and beginnings.

Meridith Hutchinson, President



What Herb Am I? solution: Lemon Verbena, taken from Colline Muir's article in the Feb/Mar 2017 issue.

If undeliverable, return to:
HSOV
PO Box 396
CAMBERWELL VIC 3124

The Herb Age

PRINT POST
100004717

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA