



# The Herb Age



OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2020

NO 423



*"I have carved in a tree in the Fitzroy Gardens for you, and the fairies, but mostly for the fairies and those who believe in them, for they will understand how necessary it is to have a fairy sanctuary - a place that is sacred and safe as a home should be to all living creatures."*

*Ola Cohn*

## THE HERB SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC

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### 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 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.

### HSOV COMMITTEE

**President &  
The Herb Age Editor** Meridith Hutchinson

**Past President** Robin Calabrese

**Vice President** Vacant

**Committee Secretary** Vacant

**Treasurer** Carmen Hollway

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*The Herb Society of Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this country, pays tributes to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and gives respect to the Elders past, present and future.*

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## THE HERB AGE

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Herb Society of Victoria*

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

Members' original contributions are warmly welcomed.

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## THE HERB AGE

### OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2020

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### Cover Pic and Quote:

Detail of fairies on the Fairy tree in the Fitzroy Gardens, Melbourne and the dedication by the wonderful lady who carved them nearly 90 years ago, Ola Cohn. With these lockdown days and short exercise with 5kms of home permitted, we have been able to get to know our local parks quite a bit better. For me, the Fitzroy Gardens is within walking distance and I am rediscovering its beauty – see article on page 7.

Ola Cohn (1892-1964) was a local artist and philanthropist, whose main body of work was modern sculptures. She gifted the Fairy Tree carvings (on a dead stump – no trees were harmed in its production) to the children (and fairies) of Melbourne in the early 1930's.





## *Our Next Meetings*



*Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020, 7.30 pm*

*Happy Herbing Zoom Meeting*

*Please join us for a very big first.*

*We are very much looking forward to seeing each other.*

### **To Register:**

Please send an email to: [theherbage@outlook.com](mailto:theherbage@outlook.com)

In the Subject: add your name and which meeting(s) to help us sort them.

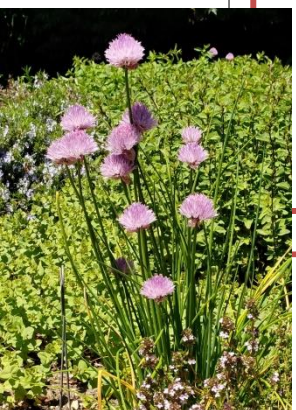
Eg: subject = 'John Smith – HSOV October meeting'  
or 'Jan Brown – HSOV October and November meetings'

### **And then What?**

You will receive an email invite a few days before the meeting with:

- the zoom meeting link - click on this link to open the meeting
- basic instructions if you need them
- meeting program, with maybe a few surprises!

As this is our first crack at a Zoom meeting, we do appreciate your patience.



*Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020, 7.30 pm*

*Happy Herbing Zoom Meeting*

*We're on a roll now!*

### **To Register:**

Please send an email to: [theherbage@outlook.com](mailto:theherbage@outlook.com)

In the Subject: add your name and which meeting to help us sort them.

Eg: subject = 'John Smith – HSOV November meeting'

You will receive an email invite with the zoom meeting link  
and more information on meeting topics.





## *President's Report*

When making the last Herb Age 2 months ago, we just had hopes of an outdoor meeting dashed and it is looking increasingly unlikely that we will be able to hold a general meeting in person at least until next year. So the big news for this report is that we are going to hold meetings via Zoom. The committee has been trialing Zoom meetings for our last couple of committee meetings and we're working it out! While, we know that some members may not be able to tune in, we are hoping we will be able to see new faces from members who have not been able to attend meetings at Burnley. It should be an interesting progression for the Herb Society and a great catch to see each other. It has been far too long between herb teas!



The Annual General Meeting is normally held in October, but has been delayed this year. We are hoping that the Zoom meeting will be successful and enable us to use the medium for our AGM in December. At the AGM, all committee positions are dissolved and members can re-nominate or new nominations can be put forward. We have some positions that are currently vacant and my tenure for President will finish this year, as our constitution allows a 2 year maximum for the role. We really need nominees for the vacant, and to be vacated roles:

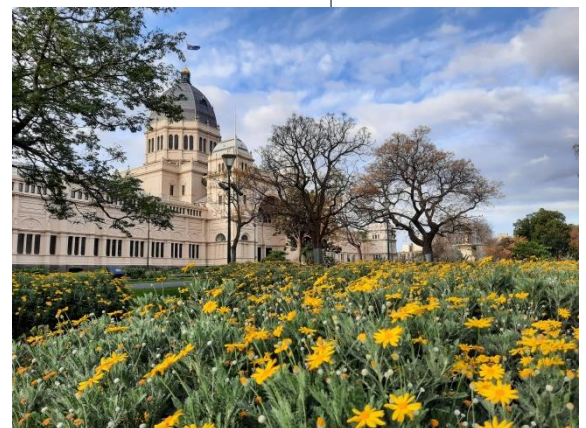
- ✿ President
- ✿ Committee Secretary
- ✿ Vice President

As a heads up, I have added the nominee form to the back of the Herb Age. Any financial member can nominate for any of the Committee roles (they are listed on the form). If you have another financial member in your household, they can sign the 'nominated by' section. Otherwise, one of the existing committee can do that for you. Our AGM reports will be available in the next Herb Age.

I'd just like to take a moment to say on behalf of HSOV, a very big thankyou to our members and their loved ones, who are under extra pressure during these times; whether it be as a health care professional, carer, volunteer, home- schooling parent or just a support for those less fortunate. And for those who have suffered illness or are doing it tough, our heartfelt thoughts. As we step closer to this lockdown (hopefully) being over, may you all be able to connect with loved ones very soon.

Like most of you, during the latest restrictions, I have been discovering more of the world within my 5km. We don't quite live within scope of the beach, but we have several beautiful parks close to us. They include, the Fitzroy and Treasury Gardens, Carlton Gardens with the magnificent old Exhibition Buildings, Edinburgh Gardens, Studley Park and the Yarra River and the Burnley Gardens. Our old state slogan was 'the Garden State' and we are indeed, very lucky to be surrounded with parks and gardens, even in the city.

I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming meetings and hope you all take care, stay safe and keep well.



*Meridith Hutchinson, President*



## Possible Garden Visits in October and November

Yes that virus has made life rather challenging and limiting in Melbourne but particularly for the many of us who are a one person household. So it appears that a solo person or two people from one household will be able to "gather outside for two hours." On that basis I give you some suggestions for visiting parks or gardens but within your 5km limit. However, do confirm what is permitted at the time.

### Burnley Gardens 70 Tram Stop 18

Where Eastern Drive meets Swan St (very close to the bridge) you will see the Colour Garden which anytime in spring will be rather spectacular. Quite a range of plants including succulents, Salvia and lavenders, are used here to make an exciting display.

In Burnley Gardens itself you could make your way to the indigenous section where there will be some Wattles flowering as well as the grasslands in flower and starting to develop seedheads. Nearby the rose garden should be displaying many flower colours particularly in November. However, if the weather is really warm you could instead wander through the shady areas and enjoy many established trees and shrubs.

### Wattle Park 70 Tram Stops 57 to 61

There is no surprise to find that this park displays a range of Wattle trees, some of which will be in flower through spring. The display of these trees can be very rewarding. Near the tram terminus (Stop 61) there is a small stream which is quite worthwhile to follow.

In the middle of the Park there is Wattle Park Chalet, a quaint building worth inspecting at any time. One of the original Lone Pine trees is growing nearby along with a replacement seedling. An European Oak of splendid form and size, is in pride of place near the carpark. Remember that several old trams now live nearby within the park.

These are my suggestions for garden visits for October and November. For when our group outings restart, suggestions for new venues are always appreciated.



*Graham Ellis*



## *Fitzroy Gardens*



During the latest Melbourne stage 4 lockdown, we are fortunate enough to live within walking distance of some great parks in Melbourne. One of these is the Fitzroy Gardens and we have been rediscovering this rather grand park on many of our daily walks.

Of course some of the structures are closed like James Cook Cottage, the Conservatory, and the shop, but most of the features are still available to enjoy. Most Melburnians will have fond childhood memories of visiting the miniature Tudor Village and Fairy Gum Tree. Pic left has a giant mower invading tiny town! I've taken time to marvel, at the way the bushes have been sculptured to represent the village trees and hedges.

The fairy and animal carvings were added in the 1930's, years after the poor old tree had died and it was lifted, treated and resettled on concrete in 1977 to keep it preserved. It could do with a retouch in the coming years, but the colourful figures still inspire the inner child with little people in unexpected nooks and crannies.

As winter set in with the promise of spring nudging at its heels, the bulbs arose, with masses of daffodils and jonquils turning their yellow and cream faces to sun. Even through my mask, I could easily smell the heavy scent of the erlicheers.



During stage 3 in July, I was walking home from the a mostly deserted city, crossing from Treasury Gardens in to Fitzroy Garden's Hotham Walk where I came across horticulturists testing the old trees that line the walk. Unfortunately, all the old Elms (*Ulmus*) have been deemed too dangerous to stay on such a busy thoroughfare. Many trees have already been lost over the years and the 18 remaining trees will be replaced with 28 new ones to restore the full walk. One side has already been removed and new trees replanted. The new trees have been purposely grown over the last 3 years, so they are already advanced to over 3 metres tall and well established, albeit it will be a long time before they provide any shade.

One old Elm was being tested as I walked past, with an ArborScope™. I was told they place a ring of sensors around the tree, which then provide feedback on the health of the tree. In this case, they know the trees have rot in the main trunk, but will not know the true extent until the tree is lopped. The physical assessment of the felled tree will be compared to the information taken now from the sensors to confirm the accuracy of the readings. They anticipate that this will provide a way to easily and non-intrusively assess all trees in the future with a high level of assurance to prolong the life of other mature trees.

Fitzroy Gardens with its familiar paths has been over a century and a half in the making. Yet, as with all gardens, there is something new to be seen on each visit and it is always a work in progress. I have enjoyed the opportunity to take some time walking through this garden raising old memories, and providing new endeavours to explore.

*Meridith Hutchinson*



## Nuts Used by Indigenous Australians

Indigenous people have used nuts, found throughout Australia, in their diets for thousands of years. The largest number of nut bearing trees is in the forests and rainforests of Queensland. They are the:

- ✿ Candlenut tree,
- ✿ Bunya Nut,
- ✿ Yellow Walnut,
- ✿ Moreton Bay Chestnut,
- ✿ Cycad and Zamia nuts,
- ✿ Black walnut,
- ✿ Matchbox Bean,
- ✿ Ivory Silky Oak,
- ✿ and the Macadamia Nut, which is non-toxic.



Some nuts are slightly toxic and processing requires pounding and washing, which is a lengthy process and special stones were used for the poundings. These stones have been found throughout Queensland.

Nuts commonly found throughout Arnhem Land include:

- ✿ Bush Cashew Nut
- ✿ Pandanus Nut
- ✿ Cycad Nut
- ✿ Kurrajong Nut
- ✿ And the Bush Peanut



In the South East of the continent, the **Macrozamia Palm Beans**, *Macrozamia riedlei*, (flower and bean above right) are poisonous nuts which have to be soaked continuously during the process, before being eaten. The **Boab** tree, *Adansonia gregorii*, in the NorthWest Kimberley produces a nut the size of an emu egg. The nut shells are also carved or painted to create intricate artworks.

The **Morton Bay Chestnut or Black Bean**, *Castanospermum australe*, (left) is found in the Queensland rainforests. It produces large seeds which are soaked, pounded and made into saponin free flour. This is made into cakes which are roasted. They provide some protein, fat and fibre.

The **Matchbox Bean**, *Entada phaseoloides* (right) is known as dhapul in Weipa on the Cape York Peninsula. The seeds are available all seasons. The hard brown shells are cracked open and the white kernel is removed. The kernels are roasted, then pulverised and soaked for several days in the dhapul (bags), then cooked again. When the pulverised nuts were soaked, the women squeezed the bags every day to change the water. The mixture was worked and made into cakes...finally.





The **Bunya Pine**, *Araucaria bidwillii*, is a tree found in the Queensland rainforest. It grows up to 80 metres. The cones are full of nuts; it crops every year with a bumper crop every third year. All different Indigenous tribes feasted on this nut. A man had to scale the tree to harvest the nuts which could be eaten raw or cooked. The feasts were times for ceremonial exchange between tribes with up to 300 people attending.

**Cycad**, *Cycas armstrongii* is found in North West Australia, Cape York and Arnhem Land, growing in dry open woodland. The low growing plants produce 20-30 seeds and the yield increases after fire. The seeds are highly toxic before being processed. They are de-husked first and the women washed this grey substance continuously off their hands. The nut kernels are pounded and soaked in running water, or still, for long periods. The fermented nut paste is made into a damper and cooked in the ashes. The treatment of the nuts varies with each tribal group. Sometimes the pounded nuts were left in the sun for a few days to dry before soaking.

**Pandanus**, *Pandanus spiralis* (below). There are several species. The nuts and kernels can be eaten raw or cooked. The fleshy basal part of the ripe fruit is scraped, soaked and eaten. The soft inner part of new leaves is also eaten. The leaves are stripped and woven into baskets for collecting and straining food. The seeds are removed after the fruit has turned red and dropped segments on the ground. In Cape York if the fruit is unripe, it is roasted before eating. The pulp of the drupe is also soaked in water to produce a sweet drink. When analysed at the University of Sydney, the nuts were found to contain between 24% to 34% protein and 44% to 49% of fat.



**Peanut tree**, *Sterculia quadrifida*, (pic above right by Ian Morris) is known in Arnhem Land as balk-balk. It is one of the most delicious nuts and requires no treatment, growing to the size of a 20c coin. Each pod contains 4 black shiny nuts. It changes from green to orange to red when ripe. Their nuts can be gathered anytime. The black skin is removed with a fingernail. The nuts are eaten on the track whilst out hunting.

**Bush Cashew nut**, *Semecarpus australiensis*, below. The nut is called ganyawu and grows in Eastern Arnhem Land in shaded forests. The sap is an irritant so children were prevented from climbing the trees to avoid an allergic itchy skin rash. The nuts are attached to a hard jelly like matter and encased in a skin which is poisonous and is burnt off. A fire is made and the ganyawu is placed between the coals for about 15 minutes.



The smoke can cause bad burns so the fire is made well away from the camp. The skins are removed without touching them, as it could peel skin off fingers. The nuts tasted like cashews and can be pounded so anyone can eat them. Hands are rubbed first with cuttle fish to clean and soaped with bush passionfruit fruit leaves to make a lather.

**Kurrajong**, *Brachychiton* spp and varietals:

- ✿ **Reel Kurrajong** *Brachychiton paradoxum*
- ✿ **Desert Kurrajong** *Brachychiton gregorii*
- ✿ **Black Kurrajong** *Brachychiton populneus* (below)



These tall trees grow in Arnhem Land and all over the country. The seeds were eaten by Indigenous peoples. The nuts of the Red Kurrajong can be harvested green or brown when they are mature. The green pods are baked in the ashes and nuts pop out of the packing which is poisonous. Hand washing is important. In the ripe brown pods, the seeds are bright yellow. The nuts and packing is rubbed off the seeds between the hands. Blindness can result if smoke blows into one's eyes from the fire when baking the seeds. In Central Australia, the Desert Kurrajong is a source of nuts for the people of the desert.

Nuts contributed an important part of the varied diet of Indigenous Australians and, as we have seen, often required arduous work to remove toxins to make them suitable for eating.

*Marie Revill*

#### References:

Aboriginal Food and Herbal Medicine by Jennifer Isaacs  
Weldon Publishing 1987, 1988, 1989

**Ed Note:** *Macadamia Nut trees can be grown successfully in Melbourne and will bear nuts. Graham Ellis has a fine example growing at his home. The tree had reached several metres high and was fruiting, when it had to be moved to make way for his new house. That was a huge job as it had a large tap root, but was moved to a much better position. Five years on, it has completely recovered and this year is a mass of flowers, hopefully with many nuts to come.*

## Lavender Masks



During these strange times, wearing protective masks has become the new normal and many of us are opting for washable and re-usable material masks. After your masks have washed and dried, consider spraying lavender water to the mask, allowing it to dry completely before wearing.

Lavender Water is the by-product from the essential oil distilling process and is commercially available. Or easily make your own by adding a few drops of Lavender Essential Oil (*Lavandula angustifolia*) to a clean spray bottle, with water, preferably distilled. Shake before applying (the bottle, not you, although that is very therapeutic too!). I have added Lavender Essential Oil to Chamomile Water, also from distilling Chamomile Oil, which is very mild.

Lavender's properties include many anti's - anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, anti-septic and antimicrobial. It also has a mild sedative effect, promoting calm during stressful times. However, these are extra benefits, as the main reason we started it is because it simply smells wonderful.

*Meridith Hutchinson*



## Easy Cheese and Chive Soufflé

Not need to be scared off with soufflés. The start of it, the roux, can be easily made in a microwave. Of course, you can use the traditional stove top method for making the roux if you like the extra work! I made this one with Gluten Free flour too. GF flour looks a little rubbery at the roux stage, but it comes out perfect – See below. Of course, regular flour is fine.

It is important that the eggs are room temperature, so a tip if you have just grabbed them out of the fridge, is to place them in a pot with cold water and pop on the stove. Bring the water to room temperature only – we aren't after hard boiled eggs after all - and let them sit in that until you are ready for them. Use any strong cheese you like – I use a mix of tasty and parmesan cheese. This is the base recipe, so add other herbs or spices (eg: nutmeg and paprika), as you like. Be sure to leave plenty of room in the oven for it to rise (yes - I have been caught out with that one before!).

### Ingredients

- 50 grams butter
- 50 grams plain flour
- 300 ml milk
- 4 eggs at room temperature.
- 120 grams grated cheese
- 1/3 cup of chopped chives

### Method

Preheat oven to 190C/170C fan forced and place a tray in the oven. Grease a 1.5L (6 cup) ovenproof dish with butter.

**Roux.** Not all microwaves are the same, so you may need to adjust your times; ours is 800W. Place butter in large heat proof (eg: Pyrex) jug. Microwave for 30 seconds until melted. Blend in the flour, then the milk and whisk to remove any lumps. Microwave for 1 minute, remove and stir. The flour should be cooked through now. Pour into a larger bowl; mix in the cheese which will cool it a little too. Season now if you wish – the cheese is salty, so you may just need pepper.

**Bringing it together.** Separate the eggs. Mix the yolks into the cheese roux mixture. Beat the egg whites with electric beater to stiff peaks. Add 1/3 of the whites to the cheese mixture and fold through gently to retain the air in the egg whites. It does not need to be perfectly mixed in. Then add another 1/3 of egg white, fold in. And the last 1/3 and fold in. Pour the mixture into your oven dish and run a knife around the inside rim of the dish. Place on preheated tray. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until golden and risen. Serve immediately. Bon Appetite!

*Meridith Hutchinson*



## Herbal Tea Tips

### Uncooked Herb Tea

Pick a bunch of mixed herbs, almost any that you like will do. Put the bunch of herbs in a clean glass and admire them on the kitchen table. The sap flows out as the water is taken in. Next morning, pour the herb water into a glass and enjoy. Delicious and refreshing. *by Colline Muir.*

### Herb Teas in a knot

When using fresh soft herbs from the garden, like parsley, peppermint or Melissa balm, try cutting the stems at least 12-15 cms long and then tie them all together in a knot. You won't need to strain leaves and when emptying the pot, it comes out in one lot.



## Unusual Fruit Trees

A hundred dollar on line order for Diggers Seeds at Heronswood, Dromana as a gift on my retirement gave me the opportunity to buy some very unusual plants.



Japanese Raisin Tree *Hovenia dulcis* sounded interesting. Photographs below. The Tree is native to Japan and Korea, but is found only rarely further south. It is deciduous and like a Eucalypt grows tall in just three years. Its branchlets are brown, black or purple; its large leaves are glossy and pointed. The tree bears clusters of small cream coloured hermaphroditic flowers in July. However, I do not know if that is in Japan or in Melbourne. But soon I shall have certainty. The drupes appear at the ends of the edible fleshy fruit stalks called rachis which are a type of accessory fruit. The rachis is fleshy sweet, fragrant and is edible raw, cooked or dried. They look and taste like raisins

An extract of the seeds, bough and young leaves can be used as a substitute for honey and is used for 'boughmaking' wine and sweets. An extract of the leaves contains hodulcine which shows an anti-sweet activity. The timber is hard and fine, used for both building and fine furniture production. It has been used in traditional Chinese, Korean and Japanese medicines to treat fevers, parasitic infections, as a laxative and a treatment of liver diseases. The tea made from the dried seeds is an aid to lessening the length and severity of a hangover. In Thailand it is used for re-afforestation



Natal Plum *Carissa macrocarpa* in its native South Africa is a dense shrub with vicious thorns. Daly's Nursery in Australia has hybridised *Carissa grandiflora*, a tree. I do have an eight years old specimen, which has glossy dark green leaves and is a great survivor in hot dry weather. The Natal Plum *Carissa macrocarpa* in its native South Africa is a dense shrub with vicious thorns. However, as an adjunct to talks on Fruit Trees to garden clubs, a small example is a necessity. The beautiful pure white star like, five petalled fragrant flowers have a slightly waxy texture and are stunning against the solid dark rounded leaves.

The whole plant is toxic, except for the edible red fruit. The plum is soft and juicy and does not need to be peeled when raw. Cut it into half or quarters and deseed. It is excellent for adding raw to deserts, in fruit salad or as a topping for cakes. I found a warning NOT to cook the plums in an aluminum saucepan. Similarly to figs, Natal Plums contain an edible latex which is released when they are cooked. That latex can be removed by rubbing the pan with oil.



Chilean Guava *Ugni molinae* is commonly known as the Strawberry Myrtle is a shrub native to Chile and adjacent to the southern regions of Argentina. The local Spanish name is Murta and the Mapuche Native American Indian name is "Uñi" or Uñiberry. ---It is sometimes marketed as the New Zealand Cranberries. Grown commercially in Victoria and Tasmania the Chilean Guavas are known as Tazzieberries. Ideal for the home garden this glossy leaved, hardy dense evergreen shrub is fine for hedging, grows up to five feet and has no pest or disease problems. Fine in a container, they grow and fruit in any position or climate, frost tender when young, but hardy and even drought tolerant once established. They are self-fertile, so do not need another plant for pollination.



In Spring a mass of bell-shaped white or pink flowers is followed by bright purple or red berries. Birds will usually leave the berries alone, so netting is not needed. The berries are aromatic, rich in vitamin C and delicious, with a combination flavour of apple, pineapple and strawberry. Great for pie fillings, jam, chutneys, the Chilean Guava flowers are amazingly scented, especially in the evening. Two other Guavas are *Eugenia ugni* and *Myrtus ugni*.

Tamarillo *Solanum betaceum*, or *Cyphomandra betacea*, Known as The Tree Tomato, was a replacement for my dead plant and was an easy choice. The Tamarillo is native to South America, is short lived, only 3 years in my experience. Facing north it needed more water in the dry years and lost lower leaves easily. Tamarillo fruit is packed with vitamins A, C and E. Its benefits digestion, weight loss, constipation, diabetes, Immunity, heart health and skin tone. I have used Tamarillos raw, mixed into softened vanilla ice cream. The result was delicious, as the acidic tamarillo was sweetened by the ice cream. Definitely an excellent summer dessert.



Carob tree *Ceretonia siliqua* was not available in March, but will be on my Spring buying list. Native to eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, a Carob Tree can grow to 49 Feet in height, prefers well drained soil and a full sun position. Watering often promotes quick growth. It is evergreen, native to the Mediterranean and Middle East, belongs to the Legume family and bears cream flowers. Both genders of Carob are needed to produce it pods. Its common name is Locust tree after John the Baptist eating locusts in the wilderness. He actually ate the insects, but that name persists.

The dark dry pods (left) are ground to make a cocoa substitute. Carob pods have been used by the ancient Greeks for 4000 years. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century doctors gave singers carob pods to suck to clear their throats. Pods can be eaten fresh or dried. Each pod is one third to one half rich in sugar and fat. They are ground up as a substitute for Chocolate. They are rich in Vitamins, Calcium, Folic Acid, Iron, Potassium, Pectin and Selenium. Eating carob prevents osteoporosis, assists weight loss, enhances immunity and digestion. The dried pods are ground to powder to create cocoa and coffee substitutes. Carob molasses is made by cooking the fruit pods in boiling water, reducing the water, then straining the sweet sticky substance to gain molasses.



Miracle Tree (above), *Moringa oleifera*, bought as seeds, unknown by me, promised a grand variety of edible treats. The hardy, drought resistant tree is native to tropical and sub-tropical regions of Asia. Its common names include Moringa, Drumstick Tree, because of its long seedpods and Horseradish Tree, as its roots taste like that herb. Just becoming known in the west, the Miracle Tree proves its name is accurate. All parts of this speedy growing tree are edible and provide more of a human's daily requirements than any other food plants. It is high in calcium, magnesium, iron, vitamins A and C, so easily boosts energy levels. The leaf tea has no caffeine, benefits the digestive system, cholesterol, diabetes, the skin and hair health.



Elder tree *Sambucus nigra*. Elder has been used for centuries for its fruit and flowers. Oddly, when raw, all parts of the tree are poisonous, giving a person who eats the uncooked berries, severe cramps, nausea and worse. The flowers have been cooked as fritters, mixed with flour, a little sugar, flour and butter. The berries make an excellent syrup or gum drops for coughs and sore throats. In fact, now pharmacies sell Sambuca lozenges for the same purpose. Our speaker, Caleb Armstrong, both a qualified naturopath and qualified pharmacist, from Selby Pharmacy, two years ago, whole heartedly endorsed Sambuca as the best help for any flu, cold or more severe chest infection

The elderberry syrup or steamed are good to add to desserts, or flavour ice cream, or make icy poles. A berry cordial to add to mineral water is refreshing and most popular is elderberry wine. The high vitamin C content in elderberries is somewhat diminished by cooking.



Chocolate Pudding Tree *Diospyros digyna* However, the most captivating new plant is definitely the Chocolate Pudding Tree, known as Black Sapote is Native to Mexico and northern South America and a cousin to the Persimmon Tree, which has orange fruit. The Chocolate Pudding tree has glossy green young fruit. But the mature Chocolate pudding fruit is dark brown, even black, once ripe. Each fruit is the size of a small apple. Who could resist the description of 'Cut the fruit in half, scoop it out and serve with cream'?



*Jill Bryant*

## *Virtual Garden Tours*

Until we get to see beautiful gardens in person, there are many virtual garden tours and wilderness parks to take. Experience these from all over Australia and the world from the comfort of your home. Here's just a handful:

<https://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/virtualgarden>

<https://www.botanicgardens.sa.gov.au/online-resources/virtual-garden-tours>

<https://www.rbgnsyd.nsw.gov.au/Learn/Living-Learning/Virtual-Tours>

<http://newcastle360.com.au/custom-virtual-tours/the-australian-botanic-garden/>

<https://www.wilderness.org.au/news-events/take-a-virtual-tour-of-our-national-parks?>

<http://www.tasmania360.com/virtualtour.php>

<https://ngs.org.uk/virtual-garden-visits/>

<https://www.usbg.gov/take-virtual-tour>

<https://kyotogardens.org/>

<https://www.youvisit.com/tour/machupicchu>



## THE HERB SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC.



### Committee Nomination Form

Positions for Nomination:

- President \*
- Vice-President \*
- Committee Secretary \*
- Treasurer
- Membership Officer
- Editor
- General Committee members \*\*

\*currently vacant or to be vacated this AGM.

\*\* up to 7 general committee members permitted.

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