

The Herb Age



FEBRUARY/MARCH 2021

NO 425



'Why fit in when you were born to stand out!' Dr Seuss

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THE HERB SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC

PO Box 396, Camberwell, Victoria, 3124, Australia ABN 22 261 579 261 Bank Details: BSB 633000 / Account 158914432

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 MEETINGS

HSOV COMMITTEE

President & Meridith Hutchinson

The Herb Age Editor

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

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:

- ₩ April/May
- ** August/September
- October/November
- * December

Members' original contributions are warmly welcomed.

Post to:

Meridith Hutchinson The Editor, The Herb Age PO Box 396 Camberwell 3124

Email to

theherbage@outlook.com

Deadline for next issue: Emailed and posted articles Wednesday 3rd March 2021

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.

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THE HERB AGE is printed by Eureka Printing Pty Ltd 702 High Street Road Glen Waverley 3150 Phone: 9887 9496

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Cover Pic and Quote.

The cover picture shows gorgeous magenta foxgloves at the Ballarat Botanical Gardens on Lake Wendouree, taken in November. Wendouree is taken from a local Indigenous Wathaurong word 'wendaaree', meaning "be off" (or "go away").

Despite that, the foxgloves were perfect hosts for us on our first big outing post lockdown. They were grand, cheery, welcoming and very colourful! The quote from the children's book author, Dr Seuss is of course for all of us, but so apt for these majestic beauties. As many will be aware, the colour magenta is on the top of Jill's list of favourite things. See her article on page 10.



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Our Next Meetings

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, 4th February 2020 New Year Back to Burnley PICNIC MEETING

From 6.00 pm

BYO Picnic for yourself. Please no share plates

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

Yes we are back to Burnley, within the safe COVID guidelines of course – please see more in the article on page 6.



Thursday, 4th March 2020

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Please be seated 7.15 for 7.30 pm Start

The delayed 2020 AGM will be held, followed by...

Guest Speaker: June Valentine

Topic: Herbs

June Valentine, pictured in full festive season regalia from December's picnic, will add some fun to the night with a presentation on Herbs.

President's Report

Happy New Year and let's hope 2021 is a good one. Deep breath – 2020 is gone! Hurray! We were very fortunate to end 2020 with the chance to meet again after several months apart, with an outdoor picnic at the Fritsch Holzer Park in East Hawthorn. While we couldn't share meals as normal, there were lots of garden treasures shared. Cuttings from Jill, packets of dried herbs from Graham, plants nursed over winter and spring by June, plus plants from member's gardens, all contributed. It was especially good to see Constance there for her 99th birthday. There were some Tussie Mussies presented to zoom meeting presenters and I was fortunate to receive one from Beverley and much appreciated. (I'm pictured posing with posy!).



Such great news that we are able to use the MB10 room at Burnley again. Our first meeting this year will be at the Sugar Gum tree at Burnley and March meeting as usual in the room. Of course, we need to comply with COVID safe practices and things may change. March will see our AGM which has been delayed from last year.

The committee is working on presenters for this year and we will advise when we know more. We have decide to postpone the Herb Conference until there is more certainty with COVID, borders and travel, but we are looking forward to holding this next year.

To kick start 2021, my hubby and I went on a holiday to South Australia for a few days. Our trip started at Port Campbell and we followed the Coast to cross the SA border near Mount Gambier. It has interesting natural features like the Umpherston Sinkhole and the Blue Lake (both pictured). The natural sinkhole was developed in the Victoria era and at the bottom there is a garden with a mix of exotic plants like hydrangeas, fuscias, acanthus and cascades of ivy amongst tree ferns and palms. Most fascinating were the native bee hives, with decades or possibly centauries of old honeycombs hanging on the rock wall faces.







The Blue Lake is so beautiful – it is a deep indigo blue over the summer months, due to complex chemistry in the limestone crater water. We continued our trip with a couple of days in wine regions around Adelaide - a short trip but it was a great break. I love rural travelling in around Christmas where farmers have festive roadside displays, like this haystack teddy bear.

All the best for the new year - 2021 will still offer its challenges, but surely it has to be a much better one!

Meridith Hutchinson, President

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Back to Burnley

It is with pleasure that the committee can confirm we will be able to resume meetings at our spiritual home at Burnley horticultural campus of Melbourne University, within COVID safe guidelines of course.

As at mid January, requirements are to:

- Record your name in the attendance book and add your best contact number for contact tracing purposes.
- Follow government guidelines on wearing masks and social distancing.
- If unwell, you must not attend the campus.

At the time of writing the article (mid January) masks are mandatory indoors and where social distancing cannot be maintained. If, and when, mask wearing regulations are relaxed, please ensure you still carry one to meetings.

As we are all aware, the Government guidelines may change quickly in response to virus outbreaks, so of course, please keep watch and follow the most up to date advice.

Unfortunately, for now we are suspending the shared supper with our general meetings. You may bring your own food for supper after the meeting, if you wish. We will still provide herbal teas after the main meeting. We realise that some people may also want to bring their own cup for herbal tea, but the HSOV cups will be available. If you can help with bringing fresh herbs for the teas or dispensing teas/washing up it would be very much appreciated.

Welcome back to Burnley. It may be a little different for a while, but it is good to be home. Stay safe and well. \odot

Herb Conference Postponed

Unfortunately the 17th Australian/New Zealand Herb conference has been postponed (again), to 2022.

The Committee has made this decision as we feel that there is still too much uncertainty around the COVID 19 virus spread. Melbourne and parts of Victoria had several months of hard lockdown last year and we are well acquainted with how quickly the situation can change should there be another wave.

We also took into account that interstate and international travel is currently difficult with Australian and even some state borders closed. Travelers to the conference from New Zealand and other states may have problems getting to the conference and reasonably priced fares may not available.

A full and interesting conference is planned and we look forward to being able to share it safely with all visitors.

Meridith Hutchinson, President

Possums

One of the delights of gardening in Melbourne, or otherwise, depending on you look at it, is having wild life visiting your garden, in the form of ring tail or brush tail possums. Both are protected species in spite of their fondness for so many of our garden plants.

Somewhere I found a list of things possums do not like, and may be used as deterrents. Here is the list. I have not used them, but they may be worth a try.

Blood and bone
Lapsang sou chong tea
Moth balls
Fish sauce
Laundry detergent full strength
Tabasco sauce
Blood and bone is recommended by Neville.

Brush tails have disappeared from our garden since more than one were found dead, we suspect from poisoning by neighbours. Ring tails are also disappearing from our garden. This is a sadness from the point of view of native fauna.



Another plant product that deters possums is quassia (Quassia amara) chips. The chipped bark used to be available from chemists, (a product called PossOff is available from Bunnings). When soaked the water becomes one of the bitterest things known. It used to be used as an antimalarial in the tropicsl. It was also added to gin and tonic. The bark may be used many times over. A word of warning. The last time I used some on the grape vines, while deterring possums, the leaves turned brown and dropped off, although I had used it on the vines in the past. Quasia is also an insecticide and is used medicinally for gastro intestinal tract disorders, anorexia, indigestion, head lice and fever.

Colline Muir

What Herb am 1?

5 Points	I'm a hardy native, low growing, perennial vegetable.	
4 Points	Nutritionally, I am high in Vitamins A, C, most B's, Iron and several minerals.	
3 Points	My genus is Tetragonia for my 4 sided seed pods (Tetra = four and Gonia = angle)	
2 Points	My thick green leaves are good to eat, but contain oxalates, so best cooked.	
1 Point	Another common name for me is New Zealand Spinach	
I am	Solution Page 15	



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The 2020 Annual General Meeting

Final Notice

The 2020 Annual General Meeting of the Herb Society of Victoria Inc. will be held **Thursday**, **4**th **March 2021**, **at 7:30 pm**.

The purpose of the Annual General Meeting is to attend to the business of the Society and the Annual Election of Officers and Committee Members as defined in the **Rules 2014**.

Our **Rules 2014** allow for up to fifteen positions on the Committee of Management. All positions are declared vacant at the AGM.

Nominations are called for the following positions:

- President
- Vice-President (2 positions)
- Committee Secretary
- Treasurer
- Membership Officer
- Editor and
- Up to seven other committee members.

NOTE: we currently only have nominations for the Treasurer, Editor and Committee roles. Most of the 'Executive Committee' do not have any nominees, including the President, Committee Secretary and Membership Officer.

A full complement of Committee members is important for the functioning of the Society and to provide services. It is also your chance to put your stamp on the future direction of the Herb Society of Victoria.

Candidates, if unopposed, shall be declared elected at the Annual General Meeting. Where more candidates are nominated than required, voting shall be by secret ballot. Any member who is unable to attend the meeting may appoint any other financial member as proxy. The member appointing the proxy must notify the Assistant Secretary (or President) in writing before the meeting.

The Committee meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month except December to organise General Meetings and other activities of the Society. Committee Meetings are conducted in a friendly atmosphere and kept as short as possible. They are either held in the same room as the general meetings – ie MB10, Main Building, BURNLEY CAMPUS or via zoom.

All financial members are eligible to attend the AGM and to stand for election to the Committee of Management. Nomination forms will be available on the night or complete the form in December 2019 issue.

All new Committee members are very welcome.

The HSOV Financial documents on the following page have been successfully reviewed by the Auditor. At the time of printing, the Auditor report was not available for the Herb Age, but will be available for the AGM.

Herb Society of Victoria Inc Income & Expense Statement for year ending 30th June 2020

INCOME	2020
Interest Received - Bendigo Term Deposit	0
Interest Received - Bendigo Account 159401736	7
Memberships / Subscriptions	2,680
Raffle Proceeds	351
Workshops	0
Sale of Plants, Seeds, Books	971
Total Income	4,009
LESS EXPENSES	
Bank Charges	0
Donation - Nest Boxes	200
General Expenses	0
Insurance	336
Library Additions	47
Postage	448
Printing - Other	1,518
Purchases Plants, Seeds, Soil, Tags, Pots	665
Raffle Costs	82
Speakers Fees	300
Subscriptions	0
Website Expenses	239
Total Expenses	3,835
Surplus (Deficiency)	174
	Interest Received - Bendigo Term Deposit Interest Received - Bendigo Account 159401736 Memberships / Subscriptions Raffle Proceeds Workshops Sale of Plants, Seeds, Books Total Income LESS EXPENSES Bank Charges Donation - Nest Boxes General Expenses Insurance Library Additions Postage Printing - Other Purchases Plants, Seeds, Soil, Tags, Pots Raffle Costs Speakers Fees Subscriptions Website Expenses

Balance Sheet as at 30th June 2020

2019	ASSETS AND LIABILITIES	2020
	Current Assets	
2,782	Cash at Bendigo Bank	19,435
31,680	Bendigo Bank Term Deposit Due 30/1/21	16,680
29	Petty Cash	50
34,491	Total Assets	36,165
	Liabilities	
	Current Liabilities	
0	Deposit Held for Conference	1,500
0.00	Total Liabilities	1,500
34,491	Net Assets and Liabilities	34,665
	MEMBERS FUNDS	
51,813	Retained Earnings	34,491
-13,661	Funds Transferred to Salvia Group	0.00
-3,661	Current Year Surplus / Deficit	174
34,491		34,665

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My Magenta and Pink Themed Garden

From the age of six I loved magenta, the colour of my doll's felt beret and the dots on her white blouse collar. Beetroot and similarly coloured fruits have been shown, in recent years, to have great benefits for health. My renewed front garden already had a scented Blackboy climbing rose, which produced about sixty blooms each year. So, its magenta colour became the focus of new acquisitions.











Palest pink next to magenta snap dragons are so dramatic. Robin propagating plants at Burnley, gave me Salvia 'magenta', my daughter's birthday gift to me included a magenta Dianthus, my husband's grandmothers Pale pink orchid continued the theme. Two miniature Lilly Pillies have pink tipped leaves in Spring and magenta fruits in Autumn. I have the native heath, floral symbol for Victoria, Epacris impressa, with its pink and white flowers and my sisters gave me Grevillia 'Jelly Bean' and the Butterfly Bush, Gaura belleza, dark pink, for my birthday. Another joy is the small bright pink flowers of Kangaroo Paw, Anigozanthus, which are easily pruned when greyed.













Dianthus

Pelargonium 'Mable Grey' Carpet Climber Red Rose

Lychnis corona

Already in my front garden are four Myrtle trees. The oldest is Lemon Myrtle, Backhousia citriodora given to me by Ray Boatman in 2000 after my second time as President of the Herb Society. After years in a pot, its freedom shows excellent growth. The three Crepe Myrtles are various pinks, the largest by the gate is two metres, bright pink and flowered so profusely last Spring, so heavy with rain the flowery branch rested on the brick pillar. The pale pink Crepe Myrtle is to the south, while the youngest is a brilliant Crimson Magenta I bought at the Jindavic Rare Plants Sale four years ago. It's between the other two and will be the feature in a few years. The Japonica is the ancient plant in the garden Our red brick Californian Bungalow will be 100 years in 2023. The Japonica was old when we moved in 47 years ago. It is a refuge for small birds and a fiery apricot pink every Winter.

The survivors in even neglected gardens are Geraniums and Pelargoniums. The brilliant Magenta flowers of the hardy geranium are a constant source of joy. Even in the years of my "survivors garden" several bushes flourished. The most dramatic plants facing east in the front bed are the Oakleaf pelargonium. Their small bunches of mauve tinged pink flowers contrast with the very large sticky serrated leaves, which turn reddish as they age. Another Pelargonium has bright pink and white flowers, strong woody stems and is so easy to grow from cuttings. While the fantastic lemon leaves are fantastic, the pink flowers of Pelargonium 'Mable Grey' are sweet. I have allowed one bush to pillar up in the pink Crepe Myrtle, so its companion blooms all winter, when I planted 15 tiny Ruby Chard seedlings!!







Crepe Myrtle Lagerstroemia

Rosa 'Ballerina'

Digiplexis 'Rosa' a Foxglove hybrid

The latest perenniels for my thematic garden are bright Pink Alstroemeria, known as the Peruvian Lily and palest pink Astilbe. The latter has just come out of hibernation to display its fine featherlike leaves and delicate pale cream stems, so vulnerable to snails. I bought both at Cloudehill, Olinda in October last year. The last additions are six annuals, magenta, pink and burgundy petunias and three perennial Arctotis. Mem gave me the one with burgundy flowers, which grows magnificently as a carpet in her front garden. The others already in flower have crimson and bright red flowers. They and the petunias are part of the ten for \$25 acquired at the nursery in Grange Road, near Glenhuntly Road. Happy Themed Gardening!









Japonica 70 plus years

Astilbe Plant

Salvia 'Magenta'

Arctotis acaulis

Oh I forgot the Federation daisies both magenta, one with a yellow centre and beauty of pure colour of the other. Two large daisy bushes, now cut back to sprouting wood have profuse flowers all Winter and by Christmas will be showing off again.

Jill Bryant

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The Cedars

On our recent journey to South Australia, we stopped at the historic town of Hahndorf, settled by German communities in pioneering times. The main street is lined with beautiful old stone buildings, as well as plenty of touristy beer taverns, sauerkraut and souvenir shops. A four minute drive from the town centre is where you will find the oldest purpose built artist studio at 'The Cedars'.

'The Cedars' colonial style house and 35 acres of gardens and land were purchased in 1912 by renowned artist Hans Heysen and his wife Sallie, where they raised their family of eight children. The studio was constructed a nice walk from the house in 1913-4 and has large south facing windows with special imported, etched glass designed to subdue the harsh light for his work. Many of his etches, charcoals, pastels, watercolours and paintings were displayed, showing the diversity of his talent.



Hans Heysen was sponsored as a young man to train in Europe for 4 years, but his best known subjects were everyday Australian rural activities and landscapes, providing an historical view of the Adelaide Hills. A good example is 'Droving into the light' (pictured). The German born artist loved his adopted country's landscape, especially the majestic gums, which he captured beautifully. He lobbied council and neighbours to preserve the great trees and when neighbouring land became available, the family purchased it for the conservation of native flora and fauna.

The cottage garden displayed exotic plants and flowers. The largest of which are huge Himalayan Cedars, for which the property is named after. The garden meanders around with charming stone paths through the greenery. The roses, other flowers and fruits from the garden were used as subjects for still life works by Hans and his artistic daughter Nora. Nora Heysen was also an accomplished artist. She was the first woman to win the Archibald Prize in 1938 and the first female appointed as an official War Artist in Papua New Guinea during WWII.

The family has retained the property for the public, with the help of volunteers. Recently the not for profit Hans Heysen Foundation has received government and private funding where they plan to add a new gallery and cultural precinct, so I look forward to seeing more on a future visit.

The interesting tour of the house concluded with popping into the garage, which housed his 1920's car and primitive van. These were Han's home as explored and painted the Flinders Ranges. The Cedars was a welcome slice of slower times and an interesting insight into the life this notable artist, his family and the garden. I can recommend it as a good way to walk off Handorf's bratwurst and sauerkraut!



Meridith Hutchinson

Herbal Word Search Puzzle

Χ F В G Ι С K Υ G Ε Ι С Α Ν Μ Μ L Ν Μ Α Ν \mathbf{L} S Q K S 0 Υ Q Q W С Ρ Ε L Α R G 0 Ν Ι U Μ Μ F V Т Ρ G L Ρ Ρ Ε Η Ε Ρ K W Χ Α Η Α G W Μ Υ Υ Ε С D U 0 Η U Υ С U L Ι Ν В Α 0 Т F S Χ Υ U G K J Α Υ 0 J Ε Ε K D K R U Ρ L U G S Τ J S L F Μ R J U U Χ Α U Ε L G Ρ Α 0 Ρ Т L S L Ν Ε Т K L Τ 0 Ε Η Т Α ∇ R Ι D Ζ R Ρ 0 Ι R R Ι Υ J J S Ε Ρ Υ G 0 U Ν 0 Ν Ν Χ Μ Υ V Ρ Ε F В K R Т Υ Ι S R Ν Q Μ D Α 0 G D L С Ε Т Ε Υ Α Χ L Ε Ε J L R L W 0 L Α Μ Ε Ε W Μ Α F S Α Ι U Α G Α F В Α Z R М Ε Ρ R R Μ G С V U L С G Ε Α Ε V С Ε S U S Ν S Ε Α Η Μ J Α U R W G 0 W 0 K R Ε Ρ С R Μ Ε 0 L R Ι Τ 0 Ε Ε Α Ρ R M Ν K L K Ρ Q S Υ R V Q Ε Ν Α Α Α Υ Ι Α Μ VJ Α Χ U 0 Χ Η Z Α Υ Α R V Ι Α D IJ G Η Α Μ S Η Т Т Ε Χ R Т W S Ι D Ι Ε Ε R Η S Т Τ С R Т Ζ R Y G Ε Ι Χ В Υ 0 Α Μ J Α D Α Α В D J 0 D U Χ G F U 0 D Ε M Υ Τ Α V Μ Ο S Ε Α R Υ Χ 0 L Ε Ε В V Ι F В Ε R Μ Μ Ι Α Χ S С Ι L R Α G 0 K L Ζ Α V Υ F С W С $_{\rm L}$ Ε Т Т В Α K Ε S Α Ρ С Ι Ε V Α Т S Ζ L Ν U Ν R M Ν Q Т R Ν Ι С Α С Η 0 G Α Ν J В

> Find the herbs in the above puzzle. Words may be up, down or diagonal.

alexanders foxglove oregano aloevera pelargonium garlic angelica ginger rosemary arnica gotukola savoury artemisia heliotrope spearmint chamomile hyssop strawberry lavender clarysage thyme comfrey madder valerian eucalyptus marjoram vervain fennel mullein

Source unknown

Contributed by Jill Bryant

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Lost the Plot Lately?

What a delight it was to see each other again for the first time in many months at the December picnic meeting. The Fritsch Holzer Park in East Hawthorn was the venue, which was around the corner from the Camberwell Community Garden. At the end of our picnic, Carmen Hollway took us on a tour to the garden, where she has been lucky enough to have a plot.







Coji plant with berries



Very healthy comfrey

The community garden is nestled in a fenced off block amongst surrounding houses and large gums and immediately provides a feeling of relaxation and wholesomeness; a deep organic sigh! This is clearly a place people have enjoyed coming together to dig the earth for some many years.

On entering there is a park bench with a reminder of what you are really here for. Where you may normally have a leisurely sit on the seat, instead there is a big sign on it "Please use these coffee grinds and chafe. High in Nitrogen and Potassium. Put in compost first (too acidic if straight on garden)." Clearly the compost material had been popular as they were well gone, while the sign remained.





Carmen's plot is nearest the gate and under a large gum tree. Carmen had a huge array of wicking beds to overcome issues from the gum roots in the ground. These were filled with an assortment of rambling herbs and vegies. Wandering amongst the several dozen plots, there was a huge variety of vegetables and herbs.

Many stables like chives, thyme, sage, mint, tomatoes, leeks, garlic, onions, kale, spinach, rhubarb, peas and beans. There were also some more unusual (although maybe more common to we herbies!) herbs like samphire, Warrigal greens, coli berries and comfrey.



While edibles were the main stars, there were a few flowers in some plots, including stunning blue forget me knots. The last of spring flowers like sweat peas and cornflowers were nearly ready to make way for the next crops. And the artichoke flowers rose up too, waiting for their seed to be collected, no doubt.







Artichoke flower reaches high



An echidna personality

We came upon Bill, who has been gardening his plot for decades. Bill proudly told us of his big potatoes, one of which this year had been nearly half a kilo! Like his, many plots were all clearly very well tended. Some showed artistic flair and personality, like the wee echidna made from scrap metal and cane or the stork taking off for the sunset. For those feeling like they have 'lost the plot' lately, then there is a garden plot for you to explore. Plot number 15's caretaker clearly had a good sense of humour.







It was such a lovely night on the picnic night; the weather was neither too warm, nor too cool.



But what made it most lovely was the chance to have a connection with each other again and also with this treasured community garden. Thankyou Carmen for sharing that with us.

Meridith Hutchinson

'What herb am I?' Solution: Warrigal Greens (Tetragonia tetragonioides) If undeliverable, return to: HSOV PO Box 396 CAMBERWELL VIC 3124

The Herb Age

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