



# The Herb Age



JUNE/JULY 2022

NO 433



*"Weeds are nutritious, often medicinal, easily available, free and grown with less care. Eat your weeds instead of nuking them!"*

*Jan Illingworth*

## THE HERB SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC

[www.herbsocietyvic.org.au](http://www.herbsocietyvic.org.au)



[www.facebook.com/groups/4104516136342577](https://www.facebook.com/groups/4104516136342577)

Meetup group: [www.meetup.com/Herb-Society-of-Victoria/](https://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

<b>President</b>	Mary Dawson
<b>Vice President</b>	Jan Illingworth
<b>Vice President</b>	Marie Baker
<b>Membership Officer</b>	
<b>Library Coordinator</b>	
<b>Past President</b>	June Valentine
<b>Committee Secretary</b>	Graham Ellis
<b>Treasurer</b>	Carmen Hollway
<b>The Herb Age Editor</b>	Meridith Hutchinson
<b>Committee</b>	Heather Davies
<b>Committee</b>	Nigel Holmes

The Herb Society of Victoria acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we join together and pay respects to Elders past, present and yet to emerge.

### HSOV MONTHLY EVENTS

HSOV meets on the first Thursday evening of every month, from February to December. Monthly events often feature a guest speaker, mini-talks or event theme, like a picnic or trivia, and followed by herb refreshments.

Monthly events are held at:

- **Room MB10 Main Building**
- Burnley campus of Melbourne University (was Burnley Horticultural College)
- 500 Yarra Blvd Richmond
- Enter MB building from the main entrance
- **Room is open 7.00pm for 7.30pm start**

Parking inside the grounds is often limited. There is ample parking on Yarra Boulevard, which is free after hours. Public transport access is nearby.

**Next Meeting Details: See Page 4**

### HSOV DETAILS

ABN 22 261 579 261

PO Box 396, Camberwell  
Victoria, 3124, Australia

Bank Details to deposit payments, including membership renewals:  
BSB 633000 / Account 158914432

Membership can also be paid via Try Booking link:  
<https://www.trybooking.com/BZGPX>

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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  
11 Byron St  
Elwood Vic 3184

### Email to

[theherbage@outlook.com](mailto:theherbage@outlook.com)

### Deadline for next issue:

Emailed and posted articles

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2022

The views expressed by the  
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## THE HERB AGE

JUNE/JULY 2022

### Contents

	Page
Our Next Monthly Events	4
Herb Conference Updates <i>by Meridith Hutchinson</i>	5
President's report <i>by Mary Dawson</i>	6
A Flower in the Garden (Show) <i>by June Valentine</i>	7
Memberships Due <i>by Marie Baker</i>	8
Herbie Trivia Round 3	8
Welcome to our New Members	9
Try the Trybooking.	9
Longacres Garden Visit <i>by Lesley Northey</i>	10
July Outing – to the Source <i>by June Valentine</i>	11
Eat Your Weeds <i>by Jan Illingworth</i>	12
Poisonous Garden Plants <i>by Janine Groves</i>	14
Fermentation Preservation <i>by Carmen Hollway</i>	14
Herbie Trivia Answers	15

### Cover Pic and Quote:

The Photo was taken on a 'Weed Walk' which was held in a beautiful sheltered spot by the Merri Creek Labyrinth in Clifton Hill. The walk was a few days after the April monthly event and hosted by Jan Illingworth.

During the weed walk, Jan (pictured below on the walk with a bundle of picked Mugwort) helped identify weeds growing along the Merri Creek and picked them to eat.

The subject of the photo is an anti-viral tea mixture that Jan made up on the day for attendees to take home. (More on the tea ingredients in the President's Report on page 5).

The morning tea before the walk, the walk itself and the weed flan, weed salad and tea Jan prepared for lunch after the walk, I have been told, were amazing. Thanks Jan! The quote is taken from the "Eats your Weeds" presentation that Jan gave to the Herb Society at the April monthly event. See more on page 12.



## Our Next Monthly Events

Burnley Horticultural College Campus  
and Gardens, Burnley Room MB10

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



**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2022**

**General Monthly and Birthday Event**

**Please be seated 7.15 for 7.30 pm Start**



**Guest Speaker:** Lesley Northey

**Topic:** Japanese Herbs and Spices

Most of us will be familiar with pungent Wasabi, but there is a plethora of herbs and spices used in Japanese medicine, cooking and culture that are becoming more accessible in Australia.

Our own Lesley Northey will guide us through some of these. If you receive the printed Herb Age, this may seem familiar. Not to worry; just some rescheduling!

**PLUS HAPPY BIRTHDAY HSOV.** Our Society is 42 years old (young!). That's 21 twice over, so something to celebrate!

Let's make it a bit of fun by wearing a herb or garden ornament. Be it earrings, hat, shawl, bracelet or brooch or anything else. Just let your imagination run wild.

Birthday celebration supper will be provided by your wonderful committee. A meeting not to be missed!



**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

Shared Supper is back on again, so please bring a plate, herbs for tea or assist at the tea trolley after the main event.

**General Monthly Event Please be seated 7.15 for 7.30 pm Start**

**Guest Speaker:** Helen Lovel

**Topic:** GoGo Gardening with Neutrog

Helen is a wonderfully engaging speaker, and 'walks the talk' developing their cattle farm in central Victoria with these products. Our home gardens provide herbs and plants that we eat, make teas or home remedies from, so it's worth a look at plant food that is organic, nutrient rich, bacterially diverse and locally made. Neutrog Biological Fertilisers are producers of 'SeaMunGus', 'Gogo juice' 'Sudden Impact' and supermulch 'Whoflungdung'. ☺ From humble beginnings, they now export to some of the most magnificent gardens and grounds around the world.

## *Herb Conference Updates*

### **HSOV Stall**

Are you downsizing or planning a declutter? Do you have any books or magazines on herbs, spices, useful plants, gardening or related subjects that you would like move on for someone else to enjoy? Then we have the occasion for you!

We are collecting such items for a HSOV stall at the upcoming Herb Conference. The stall will have good quality pre-loved books and magazines for the next upcoming Herbie. That may also include other small non-book items like crafts.

Please contact The Herb Conference sub-committee members directly or via the HSOV email [theherbsocietyofvictoria@gmail.com](mailto:theherbsocietyofvictoria@gmail.com).

### **Craft Workshop**

We will be having a Craft workshop (probably in August). The aim of that workshop is to encourage crafty ideas and make items to go into the Herb Conference 'show bags' and for sale on the HSOV stall; for example, potpourri sachets or perhaps Christmas gifts. Although there is a good chance that participants at the workshop will get to take home a bit of something!

Please email us ideas for craft items by end of June, so we can plan to have materials for the workshop be ready to sign up when we will announce it in the next Herb Age.

### **Herb Conference Progress Overview:**

Just a few things the sub-committee has been up to in preparation for the 17th Australian and New Zealand Herb Conference being hosted by HSOV in October this year.

- Ticket price for Members now includes HSOV and all Australian and New Zealand Herb Societies. These tickets are heavily reduced as an additional benefit for our collective members:
  - Full Weekend
    - Non-member - Price \$220
    - Members - \$180 (Australian and NZ Herb Society members)
  - One day only
    - Non-member - \$120 per day
    - Members \$100 per day
- Tickets will be available shortly on the online Trybooking system.
- Presenters and the weekend program are locked in – see the program in last issue of THA and on the website.
- Catering has been finalised with local CWA branches to supply morning tea and a food truck with tasty herbie lunch dishes including gluten free and vegan offerings.
- Market Stalls are filling, with a range of great items, but there is still space for more stall tables if you or someone you know would like one. Price is only \$20 plus an item for the raffle, to encourage all members or friends/family to participate.

We are still looking for helpers to join the sub-committee or to help on the conference weekend or with day tours the following week. So please reach out to contribute.

Just a reminder that the sub-committee is currently June Valentine, Meridith Hutchinson, Janine Groves, Cathryn Robinson and Jan Illingworth (Jan is not available til August).

*Meridith Hutchinson*



## *President's Report*

Dear Herb Lovers of Victoria,

As the Autumn season leaves us and we begin to nestle into the Winter months ahead I would like to take the opportunity on behalf of the Committee and our wonderful Members to say a heartfelt thank-you to Meridith Hutchinson, our Editor, for all the inspiring behind-the-scenes research and work she does to bring The Herb Age to publication for our enjoyment throughout the year. Thank You Meridith!



Since our previous April/May issue there has been an outing to Longacres in Olinda, two Monthly Events at Burnley College in April & May, and a Weed Walk along the Merri Creek Trail, in Clifton Hill. Also, committee member, Jan Illingworth, has taken on the Vice President role alongside Marie Baker, thanks Jan!

On Sunday March 27 a group of 30 members made their way on a perfect Autumn Day to Longacres, the much-loved country home and later permanent residence of the late Sir Arthur Streeton, one of Australia's great landscape painters. The magnificent garden was designed and planted by Streeton and as the last remaining property of the artist is of State historical significance (see also pic next page). Our guided tour was a truly memorable experience which I hope you enjoy reading about in the following pages of Lesley Northey's article. The Herb Society of Victoria would like to thank Julie Dodds-Streeton QC (pictured right with Mary) and Craig Wilson (Gentiana Nursery) for the valuable opportunity to visit Longacres.

The Guest Speaker for our April Monthly event, member Lesley Northey, was unfortunately unable to present on this occasion and we shall look forward to learning about 'Japanese Herbs' in July.

Thanks to Jan Illingworth for stepping in as our replacement Guest Speaker and delivering an in-depth presentation on 'Eat Your Weeds'. There was no lack of freshly plucked weeds to sample (Plantain, Brassica, Fat Hen to name just a few) as Jan shared the history, harvest and medicinal/culinary uses of weeds oft described 'as a plant in the wrong place'. It was a fascinating insight some of which Jan has written about in this issue.

Following on from Jan's presentation on 'Eat Your Weeds' a small group of members met up at the Labyrinth, located along the Merri Creek Trail, in Clifton Hall to join her on a Weed Walk. The bluestone Labyrinth was created by the local community in 2002 and continues to be maintained by community effort as a much-loved landmark in the area. The Weed Walk flyer that Jan handed out at the talk read 'Morning tea, weed walk, mugwort harvest, lunch.in keeping with eating our weeds!!



After a morning tea of Dandelion coffee served with scones, jam & cream we walked an area of roughly 150 metres square between the Labyrinth and Merri Creek and in that relatively small space identified Dandelion, Brassica, Canadian Fleabane, Chickweed, Blackberry Nightshade, Nettle, Plantain, Fumatory, Cleavers, Clover and a sprinkle of Fat Hen. An armful of mugwort, harvested from a tiny 'island', midstream in Merri Creek was carried back to the Labyrinth where Jan provided a delicious homemade lunch of weed frittata and weed salad; you will find the recipes in this issue! We all wandered away with a bag of anti-viral tea from Jan's demonstration of blending chrysanthemum, liquorice, mint, mandarin peel, and mulberry leaves.

The May General Event was also unable to be attended by planned our Guest Speaker, Ann Makhijani from Gardens for Wildlife Victoria, and we look forward to a future date on the topic of 'Wildlife Habitat in Home Gardens'. Thanks to June Valentine, who took time out from busy

preparations on the Herb Conference in October, to deliver a wealth of information in her presentation on the topic of 'Eucalyptus Oil'. As one of the most versatile of all essential oils June covers some of the unlimited uses it has in the following pages.

A reminder that Membership renewals are due from July 1<sup>st</sup> and as you will note in this issue our Membership Officer, Marie Baker, has been doing some research into TryBooking, an online booking and event ticketing system, as a potential and additional avenue for the payment of membership subscriptions into the future.

Time for a celebration .... The Herb Society of Victoria will celebrate its 42<sup>nd</sup> Birthday at the June General Event at Burnley College. The Committee extends a warm invitation to come and join us on this special occasion, particularly special, because we can come together in person this year! Supper will be provided by the Committee and we greatly look forward to seeing you there in your 'wearable garden adornments'...please find further details inside.

I shall leave you to enjoy the June/July issue of The Herb Age, with something I found in the frontispiece of a book 'Natural Healing' by Chrissie Wildwood (1997) that was recently donated to our May Monthly Event raffle.....

“Men” said the Little Prince, ‘set out on their way in express trains, but they do not know what they are looking for. Then they rush about, and get excited, and turn round and round....And’, he added ‘it is not worth the trouble....what they are looking for could be found in one single rose, or in a little water....but the eyes are blind. One must look with the heart” Antoine De Saint-Exupery *The Little Prince*

Wishing you a Winter of joy in the garden! Hope to see you at our Birthday Celebrations in June,

*Mary Dawson, President*



## *A Flower in the Garden (Show)*

Hello fellow Herbies from June. Those of you who know me, are aware that I like to dress for the occasion and so it was when I attended the Melbourne International flower and garden show in March this year. My floral hat and floral earrings are from Australia; my floral top is from the UK, and my floral pants, and floral socks are from the USA (undies from China). The show has not been held for the past two years because of Covid, so I was expecting a bigger and better one this year, but was disappointed.



There were about 20 to 30 less exhibitors and display gardens, and only one stage inside the Exhibition building, with fewer displays and hardly any floral art competitions. I only bought two plants and some bulbs during my visit. My husband was very surprised and asked if I was ill. Osmocote held a free terrarium, and also a free succulent workshop which I participated in and was delighted with my designs. The organisers of the show were very happy with the attendance numbers, I don't know about the exhibitors though. Anyway, hopefully next year will be more of a razzmatazz event.

*June Valentine*

*Ed Note: This photo is almost a 'Where's Wally?' with floral June blending in amongst the flowers. If she wasn't on a bright orange seat, we might have completely lost sight of her. She told me she got a wee award for her enthusiastic attire too! 😊*

## Memberships Due

### Membership renewal is due on 1 July 2022

Existing members have the option of renewing under one of the following categories

- Individual Membership with *The Herb Age* by email \$26
- Individual Membership with *The Herb Age* by post \$34
- Family Membership with *The Herb Age* by email \$32
- Family Membership with *The Herb Age* by post \$42

### Methods for payment

The preferred methods of payment are:

- Transfer of funds into HSOV Bank Account  
Name of account: The Herb Society of Victoria Inc.  
BSB 633 000 Account number 158914432  
*Add YOUR NAME to the Reference field so that your remittance can be identified.*
- Online Payment using trybooking <https://www.trybooking.com/BZGPX>  
Step by step instructions next page.

### Other methods of payment are:

Payment by cheque

Post to: The Herb Age of Victoria PO Box 396 Camberwell Vic 3123  
Please include your name so that the payment is correctly identified.

Payment with cash in person at a HSOV monthly event.

### Renewal Form

It is not necessary for renewing members to fill out a Membership Renewal form. However, please inform us of any change in your details by one of the following methods:

- By post to the above address or
- By email: the [herbsocietyofvictoria@gmail.com](mailto:herbsocietyofvictoria@gmail.com)

Please note that members who have joined the Society from February 2022 onwards are not required to pay a membership renewal. Their membership will be current until 30 June 2023.

Prompt payment would be appreciated for ease of record keeping and to enable committee members to attend to other tasks. Any queries in regard to the renewal process can be sent to the email address above to Marie Baker.



### ROUND 3

- 25 Cryptic clue: A vehicle leaving
- 26 This spice can be black, green or white, depending on the stage of ripeness when picked
- 27 A feline bite
- 28 Rhymes with porridge
- 29 This rhizome is similar in taste and appearance to ginger
- 30 Cryptic clue: A soil creature, and product of a tree
- 31 Which country's cuisine uses the spice blend Panch Phora?
- 32 Name at least five words that rhyme with spice
- 33 The boiled roots and leaves from this herb have been used to clean the Bayeaux Tapestry
- 34 A nickname for someone with red hair
- 35 The seeds, leaves and roots are all used from this herb/spice
- 36 Cryptic clue: A herb which is a coin with a regal side

Answers on page 15



# Welcome to our New Members

The Herb Society says a very big welcome to our newest members and very much looking forward to seeing you in person soon, if we haven't already.

Linda Trikarso  
Andrew Smith  
Derrick D'Souza  
Sybil Quadros  
Naomi Ingleton  
Christine Hall  
Justine McDonough

PS Derrick, bet you didn't expect to see your face in the Herb Age already. Pic taken on the wonderful Longacres tour! 😊



## Try the Trybooking

When I was a wee lass popping 20 cents into my State Saving Bank book at primary school, I never dreamed there would be a day when cash would become so...well...old school! So many people these days don't even carry cash. The HSOV has long taken cheques (which banks are starting to phase out) and has facilitated payments directly into our bank account. We are now offering online payment for new or renewing membership via 'trybooking'. Please note that there is a small fee of 50 cents which will be added to your purchase.

It is very easy to use:

- Click this link (or enter the URL) <https://www.trybooking.com/BZGPX>
- or go into [www.trybooking.com](http://www.trybooking.com) Press 'Buy Tickets', search on 'HSOV' or 'Herb', and select 'Membership Herb Society of Victoria (HSOV)'.
- Press 'Buy now' button
- Select the Membership Type and Next button
  - Email THA Single (available for new and existing members)
  - Email THA Family (available for new and existing members)
  - Posted THA Single (open to existing members only)
  - Posted THA Family (open to existing members only)
- Enter your details and add Credit or Debit Card or you can use Pay Pal to make payment.
- Press Purchase
- You will receive a confirmation of successful transaction and an email is sent with a receipt.
- You also view or download the ticket as proof of payment.

Of course, you may continue to use the existing methods by paying directly into our bank account or sending a cheque (please add your name as reference, so we can reconcile it) or even (dare I say it) paying cash at a meeting!

The link has also been added to the references on inside front cover of the Herb Age and will be uploaded to our website. If you have any issues, please contact our membership office, Marie Baker on email [theherbsocietyofvictoria@gmail.com](mailto:theherbsocietyofvictoria@gmail.com).

trybooking

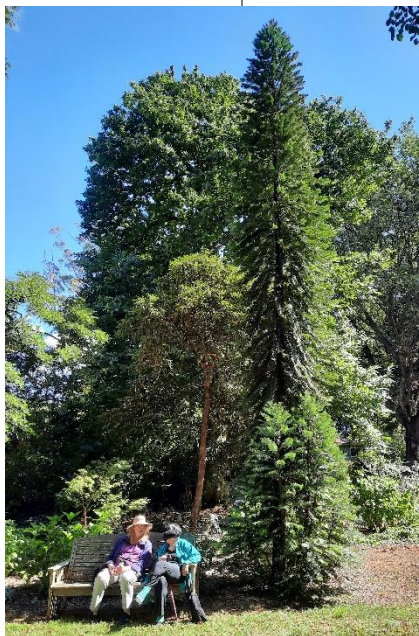
Membership Herb Society of Victoria (HSOV)

Select tickets  
Sunday 1 May 2022 1:00 AM - Friday 30 June 2023 12:00 PM

Single membership	Receive The Herb Age by email	\$26.00	- 0 +
Family membership	Receive The Herb Age by email	\$32.00	- 0 +
Existing single	Existing members only. Receive The Herb Age by post.	\$34.00	- 0 +
Existing family	Existing members only. Receive The Herb Age by post.	\$42.00	- 0 +

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## *Longacres Garden Visit*

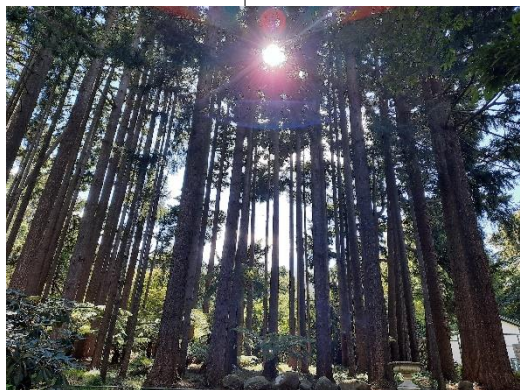
What a delightful experience everyone had during our long-awaited tour of Longacres gardens on Sunday 27th March 2022. The weather was balmy, and the beautiful gardens were just beginning to show their autumn colours.

Longacres at Olinda in the Dandenong Ranges was the country home and in later life, the permanent home of the Australian landscape artist Sir Arthur Streeton. Longacres was Streeton's final and most loved house. Much of the garden was created by Streeton, a keen gardener. He planted many North American species, to make his Canadian born wife feel more at home in the bush, including oaks, lindens, tulip trees, conifers, rhododendrons and fruit trees.

Early arrivals at Longacre were encouraged to visit Arthur Streeton's painting studio, which remains in original condition, almost as if he has just popped outside! Once all were assembled the tour commenced, led by Craig Wilson of Gentiana Nursery, who maintains these beautiful gardens. We were also accompanied by the current owner, the Hon. Julie Dodds-Streeton, who also offered additional insights and stories about the gardens and buildings.

The tour commenced in front of the house, where we admired the established oak trees and linden avenue, which Julie mentioned has the most amazing perfume in the early morning during summer. Craig pointed out the recent heavy pruning needed to reduce the size of the beautiful rhododendron bushes to allow more light into the garden and to the house. We admired underplanting and borders of lily of the valley, miniature cyclamens and hellebores.

We continued towards Arthur Streeton's painting studio, admiring many different hydrangea varieties, a large tulip tree, and a Wollemi pine planted by grandson Roger Streeton, which is now about 10m tall (pic above with Janine and Jill seated at its feet). Craig admitted that he had been assiduously pruning the lower branches and root suckers, until he recently discovered they naturally grow with multiple stems and is now allowing these to grow!



Craig also commented on some of the challenges in maintaining the garden, including the pesky feral deer, who "just eat everything"! We could see several plants that had been sadly decimated by the deer, and a number of establishing replantings that are protected within enclosures until they are large enough to withstand being foraged by the deer.

We were invited to explore the tiny caretaker's cottage (pic above with Jan), also in original condition, where we marvelled at the ability of the caretaker to reside within this tiny three-roomed building with a family of four children!

We continued our wander down past the stunning espaliered apple walk established by Roger Streeton, past a former (and unsuccessful) dam, now re-established by Craig as an azalea bowl. We admired the views of the Westernport Bay, then walked up through a mature Douglas Fir plantation, stopping by an old hand pump where Julie invited us to try the beautiful spring water. It was refreshingly delicious! The final stop was at the rockery gardens, established by Arthur Streeton..



We returned to the statue garden just outside the main house, where the society president Mary Dawson thanked both Julie and Craig for their generosity in enabling this very special tour (see below). Mary also presented each with a beautiful card hand-painted by her daughter Mia, and a tussie mussie created by our Meridith Hutchinson, which we hope our hosts have enjoyed.

And then a wonderful surprise! We were invited to into the in the main house, where members of the Streeton family served us with afternoon tea. What a special treat to enjoy coffee or tea served in vintage china in the beautiful galleried music room surrounded by original artworks and other Streeton memorabilia.



The Herb Society of Victoria would like to acknowledge the extraordinary generosity of Julie Dodds-Streeton in permitting the garden tour to happen and in inviting participants to also visit Arthur Streeton's painting studio, caretakers' residence and for afternoon tea in the gallery. What a very special experience for us all.

We would also like to thank Craig Wilson for guiding us around the gardens, and for inviting us to his nearby Gentiana nursery (pic above with June and Mem), where he grows a range of plants on site that are not widely available in other outlets. Several of us were able to find a special plant (or two or three!) to take home to add to our own collections!

*Lesley Northey*

*Ed Note: Thanks Lesley for taking on organising this day – it was fantastic!*



## *July Outing - to the Source*

An outing is planned for July to visit 'The Source' (bulk buy) shop at Burwood Brickworks shopping centre. The date and time to be confirmed but most likely Saturday July 16th or 23rd at 2pm. These will be announced at our June and July meetings, as well as on the website, meetup and facebook group page.

### **Reduce, Reuse and Recycle**

By choosing to buy bulk and recycling your own containers, not only can you purchase as much or as little as you want but also make a difference to the environment. There is a wide range of Australian and International products (organic where possible) e.g. cleaning products, flours, grains, chocolates, dried fruit and vegetables plus herbs and spices and so much more.

The Burwood Brickworks Shopping Centre is the first retail centre to achieve Living Building Challenge® Petal Certification, has been created with sustainability goals for capturing water, reducing power, and providing multiple green spaces. The address is 70 Middleborough Rd Burwood (near the RSPCA) in Burwood.

This outing will include an informative session plus free tastings. Pencil these dates in and start saving your re-usable bags and containers to take with you.

*June Valentine*



## ***Eat Your Weeds***

Our April monthly event was with Jan Illingworth, Naturopath and HSOV committee member and it was absolutely jam packed with information. Below is a summary from her presentation. Each weed (herb 😊) had its common and botanical name, was shown with its picture, an overview of each plant, its benefits and how best to use it and some interesting facts. For example, from the many weeds that were covered:



“Fat Hen; *Chenopodium album*

The leaves are good in anything one would use for salads, casseroles, rissoles, quiche and on pizzas. It is related to Quinoa, so the seeds can be eaten raw, toasted or ground into flour for bread.

Medicinally; used for sugar imbalances, bacterial and inflammatory problems. High in nutrients, a general cure-all in Ayurvedic medicine including parasites.

A favourite of chooks and makes the yolk yellower and grown for sheep and pigs. The leaf paste applied to wounds on cattle (and poultices for humans) to help inflammation and healing. Given to sheep to reduce the *trichostrongylid* nematode worm.”

Jan began:

“Weeds as they say, is a plant growing in the wrong place with the Macquarie Dictionary stating that; a weed is a plant growing wild, especially in cultivated ground to the exclusion or injury of the desired crop. Plants, such as clover are a pain in lawns and gardens, but is wanted in animal fodder pastures as a nitrogen fixer, while one could easily name dozens of desired garden plants that have found their way into the bush and paddocks.

Back to edible weeds and the discovery of Grauballe Man in a bog in Denmark, dated approx. 200BC found up to 80 different plants in his gut of which only 5 were known to be cultivated at the time, just Rye and Barley are cultivated today. Most of those plants are considered weeds, but are nutritious, often medicinal, easily available, free and grown with less care.”

And the list of weeds she covered was extensive, with a few weedy samples to taste. And that was all followed up by a Weed Walk with morning tea and lunch a few days later (pictured). Wow!

### **Weeds used for leaves**

Chickweed; *Stellaria media*.  
 Cleavers; *Galium aparine*  
 False Dandelion; *Hypochoeris radicata*  
 Fat Hen; *Chenopodium album*  
 Fumatory; *Fumaria muralis*  
 Nettle; *Urtica* spp  
 Potato Weed; *Galinsago parviflora*  
 Prickly Lettuce; *Lactuca serriola*

Purslane; *Portulaca oleracea*  
 Sheep sorrel; *Rumex acetosella*  
 Shepherd's purse; *Capsella bursa-pastoris*  
 Sow Thistle; *sonchus asper*  
 Vietnamese Mint; *Persicaria odorata*  
 Wandering Jew; *Tradescantia fluminensis*  
 Wood Sorrel; *Oxalis corniculata*  
 Yellow Dock; *Rumex crispus*

### **Weeds for seeds**

Amaranth; *Amaranthus viridis*  
 Fennel; *Foeniculum vulgare*

### **Weeds for oils**

Wild Radish; *Raphanus raphanistrum*  
 Evening Primrose; *Oenothera biennis*

### **Weeds for fruit**

Blackberry; *Rubus fruticosus*  
 Hawthorn; *crataegus monogyna*



**Weeds for flowers**

Daisy; *bellis perennis*  
 Clover; *Trifolium repens*  
 Honeysuckle; *Lonicera japonica*  
 Jasmine; *Jasminum polyanthum*  
 Marshmallow; *althea off*  
 Sweet Cecily; *Myrrhis odorata*  
 Violet; *Viola odorata*

**Weeds that use roots**

Chicory; *Cichorium intybus*  
 Dandelion; *Taraxacum officinale*

**Preparing Weeds**

- Pick in the morning after dew has risen and before it is too hot.
- Leaves can be cut just above the ground and washed for fresh use.
- Most herbs can be frozen in water, olive oil or butter for cooking later.
- Flowers can be frozen in water to add to cordials, punch or a water garnish.
- Roots are best pulled up before it gets too cold, washed and cut while soft.
- Put plastic bags with a rubber band around seed heads.
- If drying; put out on cotton in an airy, none sunny place.
- Fleshy leaves need to be completely dry as they are prone to mildew.
- Removing detritus, put into calico bags and a cool, dark place.

**Weed Endorsement**

- Adds variety to an area for creatures and insects like bees to live.
  - Easy to grow, less care to look after and are free to harvest.
  - Many weeds are full of nutrients and add diversity to an area.
  - Some can break up clay and difficult soils.
  - Can add a mulch cover for moisture and protection.
  - Often grows on impoverished ground that other plants will not grow in.
  - Tap roots can bring nutrients further down into the soil.
- Eat your weeds instead of nuking them!



*Jan Illingworth* (with commentary from Meridith Hutchinson)

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## Poisonous Garden Plants



On our recent trip to Longacres in Olinda, Jill Bryant pointed out the toxic perennial:

- **MONKSHOOD**, *Aconitum napellus*. Belonging to the Ranunculaceae family. Other common names are wolf's bane, devil's helmet, blue rocket and more. All parts are toxic, especially roots, seeds and leaves. Even touching the leaves with bare hands can lead to numbness. It affects cattle, sheep and humans. Poisoning is rare because of the unpleasant flavour.

For poisonous plants and flowers, toxicity is a defense mechanism against predators who might want to eat them. The poisonous substances may be stored until the plant is injured. Some cause immediate irritations. Others may cause severe health conditions or even death. Here are some common ones:

- **RHUBARB**, *Rheum officinale* in the Polygonaceae family. The stems are used in cooking, herbalists use the root. The plant's leaf blades contain oxalic acid which is poisonous.
- **FOXGLOVE** *Digitalis* is an herbaceous plant. Ingesting flowers, seeds, stems or leaves can be poisonous. It has been referred to as dead man's bells and witch's gloves.
- **DAFFODIL**, *Narcissus* the bulbs could be mistaken for onions. It contains oxalates which can cause irritation.
- **LILY of the VALLEY** *Convallaria Mahalia* is a perennial rhizome contains toxic compounds including cardiac glycosides.
- **HYDRANGEA**, Hydrangeaceae family, contains toxins cyanide in the flowers. A lot needs to be ingested for the effects to be fatal.
- **OLEANDER**, pink *Nerium oleande*, ingesting only a small part can be fatal. Just touching its sap can lead to irritation. It contains several types of cardiac glycosides. All parts of the plant are toxic.

*Janine Groves*

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## Fermentation Preservation

Lacto-fermentation, in one form or another, has existed in just about every society and culture that we have record of. From sauerkraut in Germany to kimchi in Korea, lacto-fermented foods are prevalent in pre-industrial societies. The process of fermentation allows foods to stay edible longer. While a cabbage might rot within a couple of weeks at room temperature, sauerkraut can be kept for months, and in some cases years.

**HOW FERMENTATION PRESERVES FOOD** The brine used in lacto-fermented foods creates an anaerobic, acidic environment. Anaerobic means that there is no oxygen present in the environment. Many lacto-fermented recipes emphasise keeping the food below the level of the brine because the "bad guys" are unable to grow in this environment, while the "good guys" have everything they need.



Many people familiar with home food preservation are concerned about botulism. Botulism is a toxin produced by *C. Botulinum* bacteria and cannot survive in an acidic environment. The acids produced by fermentation protect against the toxin, and help to make lacto-fermentation one of the safest methods of food preservation.

**THE BENEFITS OF LACTO-FERMENTATION** There are advantages of lacto-fermentation over other methods of food preservation include, the end product has more nutrients compared to canning. Lacto-fermentation enhances the nutritive value of the food, and many enzymes and probiotics are created. The process is as easy as chopping up veggies, adding salt, and leaving it alone. A general rule is use what you have and make it so you like the taste

**Step 1: Find your vessel** Because lacto-fermenting involves brine, it's important not to use vessels or tools that are going to rust or degrade when exposed to salt. Suitable vessels include those made from glass, ceramic, stone or food safe plastic. Take care when using enameled vessels, as it must be completely free from cracks or chips as the salt may seep through to the metal underneath and cause issues. There is no need to completely sterilise your vessel. A thorough wash and rinse with hot soapy water is enough as the salt will kill off the bad bacteria in the vessel anyway. You can purchase special fermenting crocks which help keep oxygen out of your fermenting environment, but remember that people have been using simple tools to ferment for centuries.

**Step 2: Work out what you're fermenting.** The main aim in lacto-fermenting is to surround your plant material with a 2-3% (or higher) brine. this means for every 100ml of liquid in the vessel, there should be 2-3g of salt. When you're using softer fruits and veggies like tomatoes, cucumbers, plums etc, there's already a high level of water in them, so you can just add the salt, but for firmer, crunchy veg like carrots or chillies, there's not enough water present in them to produce a brine, so you make a separate brine to submerge the plant matter in. Work out whether you're making crunchy ferments where you'll need to mix up a brine first (like dilly beans or cheat's pickled onions), or a soft ferment (like salsa, sauerkraut or kimchi) which will just need salt.

**Step 2.1: Mix some brine (if needed)** Use pure salt with no preservatives in it. Make sure your salt is finely ground so it distributes evenly. This also affects your measurements Use dechlorinated water such as rain water that is boiled then cooled or ordinary tap water left in a wide vessel for 24hrs to naturally evaporate. This is important as chlorine may potentially destroy some of the bacteria present on the vegetables that you are looking to cultivate. Then add 1tbsp pure salt to 500ml water and allow it to cool. NEVER pour hot brine over your veggies, as it will kill the bacteria you want working for you. NOTE: Increasing the salinity (salt concentration) of your ferment will cause it to ferment more slowly, and vice versa. You may like to add more salt during warmer months (which will hinder undesirable bacteria & yeasts from kicking off in the heat), and less in winter. Never dip below 2-3%, or else harmful bacteria may survive. 5% is considered pretty darn salty. To be Continued.....

*Carmen Hollway*

*Ed Note: oh my Gosh, we have run out Herb Age. Apologies for leaving you mid-brine to have to wait til to see the next steps in the next issue!! Will be worth the wait I'm sure.*

### **Herbie Trivia Answers. ROUND 3**

25 Caraway; 26 Pepper; 27 Catnip; 28 Borage; 29 Galangal; 30 Wormwood; 31 India; 32 nice, mice, dice, thrice, twice, splice, lice, rice, ice, price, advice, vice, entice, slice, gneiss; 33 Saponin (soapwort); 34 Ginger; 35 Fennel and also coriander; 36 Pennyroyal



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