



The Herb Age



FEBRUARY/MARCH 2023

NO 437



"Your garden should not only be beautiful to look at but also a dynamic, balanced haven for all creatures (and plants) big and small. " Penny Woodward

THE HERB SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC

www.herbsocietyvic.org.au



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Facebook

www.facebook.com/groups/4104516136342577

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

AIMS OF THE SOCIETY

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

Patron: Penny Woodward

HSOV COMMITTEE

President	Jan Illingworth
Vice President	Vacant
Committee Secretary	Vacant
(Acting til early 2023)	Graham Ellis
Treasurer	Carmen Hollway
The Herb Age Editor	Vacant
(Acting)	Meridith Hutchinson
Membership Officer	Marie Baker
Committee	June Valentine
Committee	Nigel Holmes

The Herb Society of Victoria acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we join together and pays respect 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>

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

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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:

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Email to

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Emailed and posted articles

Wednesday 8th March 2023

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.

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THE HERB AGE

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2023

Contents

	Page
Our Next Monthly Events	4
Tussie Mussie Workshop	5
Welcome to our New Members <i>by Marie Baker</i>	6
Herb and Spice Word Search	6
Committee Update	7
A Herbal Letter <i>by June Valentine</i>	7
Herb Conference: Overview of Presentations Part 1 <i>by Meridith Hutchinson</i>	8
THA Articles Please <i>by Meridith Hutchinson</i>	10
Heidi Garden Walk	11



Cover Pic and Quote.

The photo of bees swimming in a sea of French lavender was taken some ago at Lavandula Lavender Farm near Daylesford. Lavender is among many plants that can be used in organic pest control.

The quote from Penny's website relates to her book on Pest Repellent Plants and is the topic of her presentation at the upcoming March meeting. You'll remember this was scheduled for the Herb Conference, but unfortunately had to be postponed. Penny is making good on her promise to deliver the presentation at one of our monthly events instead.

Her fabulous books will also be on sale (Although those who attended the conference will have one already, as Penny donated a book for each participant – a very generous gesture).

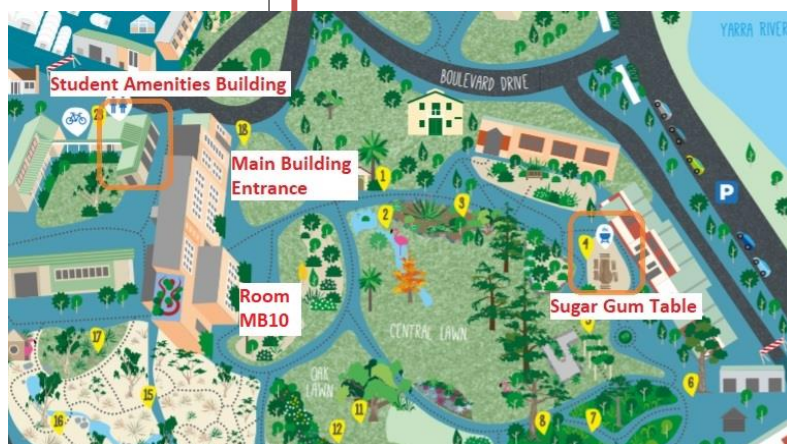


Our Next Monthly Events

Burnley Horticultural College Campus and Gardens

Parking inside the grounds is limited.
Free after hours parking is also available on Yarra Blvd.

Thursday, 2nd February 2023
Join us for a New Year PICNIC



Early - From 6.00 pm
BYO Picnic to Share

At the Sugar Gum Tree Table

Near the Herb Garden in Burnley Gardens
(or in our usual room MB10 if poor weather)
Bring food, drink and a mood for relaxed chat!

And if it's a nice night, an after dinner stroll
looking at the gorgeous and historic Burnley
Gardens is likely on the cards.

Thursday, 2nd March 2023

General Monthly Event in Room MB10

Please be seated 7.15 for 7.30 pm Start

Please bring plate of Supper to share or herbs for tea

Guest Speaker: Penny Woodward

Topic: Pest Repellent Plants & other Organic solutions

Penny is Patron to the HSOV and was a key note speaker at the recent Herb Conference. She has a wealth of knowledge, experience and qualification in horticultural. She had run her own herb nursery, writes for Organic Gardener magazine and is a regular on the 3CR gardening show. She writes practical and beautiful books, which will be for sale.

This focuses on how to reap the benefits of our gardens, but minimise the harm to the environments. It's your chance to see the presentation that was planned for the Herb Conference, but had to be postponed.

Plus: Penny's Books for Sale

Plus: Herbs for Sale.

The HSOV will have a stall with nursery grown herb plants for amazing prices.
So, the night is a wee slice of the Herb Conference really!



Tussie Mussie Workshop

When: Sunday 19 March 2023

Time: 11am start.

Where: Sugar Gum table at Burnley Gardens (near the Herb Garden). Back up in case of bad weather, to be confirmed.

Expected Duration: 2 hours
plus option to stay for a shared BYO lunch afterwards

Cost:

- Free for HSOV and FOBG members
- Non-members \$20

Plus:

- Bring Herbs/flowers/foilage to share for making Tussie Mussies.
- BYO lunch, preferably a plate to share after the workshop



Bookings for this event using the Try Booking on-line system will be available soon.

Please ensure you book as numbers are limited for this event. Keep an eye on the website for an update to add the Try Booking link. The last Tussie Mussie workshop held way back in 2018 (see below), was very popular with good reason – it was such a fun day!

Tussie Mussies are such an integral part of the Herb Society of Victoria, as we gift one to our guest presenters at monthly events, and they are occasionally available as raffle prizes too.

Tussie Mussies are small posies of herbs and flowers with a long history. Apart from being beautiful, they provide sweet smells, can be a means to gift herbs and flowers, or a way to convey messages using the language of flowers or they can simply to make us smile!

The workshop will provide an overview of the history and a lesson in how to make your own Tussie Mussies for yourself or as a lovely ‘thankyou’, ‘get better soon’ or ‘thinking of you’ gift for friends and family.

This will be a very co-operative experience, dependent of everyone bringing contributions for the Tussies to share. And of course, you get to take home your Tussie Mussies. Expect it to be very hands on and, we hope, a lot of fun! 😊

Herbs, flowers and foliage to bring include (but not limited to) thyme, savory, hyssop, rosemary, lemon verbena, sage, scented geranium foliage, geranium flowers, lavender flowers and foliage, wallflowers, daisies, scented mints, marjoram, billy buttons, carnations, love-in-a-mist, cornflowers, calendula, or anything from the garden that looks or smells good and lasts a while once cut. Try to keep stems long enough for a posie and buds last longer than full booms. Smaller flowers are usually better, but it is truly surprising what can be used.

Queries to Meridith Hutchinson theherbage@hotmail.com





Welcome to our New Members

Please welcome our newest members to the Herb Society of Victoria. We hope to see you very soon at our upcoming events. Events are shown in the Herb Age, and on our website, Facebook group and meetup page (details/links on the inside front cover).

Rory Bochner
Chloe McPhee
Kathryn Wendler
Audrey Colbert

Marie Baker, Membership Officer

Herb and Spice Word Search

Find the herbs and spices in the puzzle. Words can go in any direction.

Words can share letters as they cross over each other.

Created using puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com.

Answer on page 11

Y	M	C	L	B	B	J	C	Q	N	D	D	C	F	H
E	E	V	O	A	C	H	W	R	X	E	Q	U	E	S
L	L	L	Y	R	I	Q	A	K	E	D	U	R	N	I
D	T	I	S	V	I	L	I	S	A	B	D	R	U	D
E	R	L	E	R	S	A	E	O	T	V	N	Y	G	A
R	Y	S	I	U	A	L	N	N	L	T	O	L	R	R
F	M	D	Q	C	T	P	I	D	U	G	R	E	E	E
L	N	Y	U	T	O	M	W	M	E	B	F	A	E	S
O	O	V	A	M	R	R	E	D	C	R	F	V	K	R
W	M	W	K	E	D	R	I	H	X	K	A	E	I	O
E	E	J	P	E	I	A	X	C	Z	I	S	S	Z	H
R	L	P	G	C	A	C	I	L	E	G	N	A	I	W
I	E	A	E	C	H	I	N	A	C	E	A	I	A	E
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N	U	T	M	E	G	P	S	A	L	T	B	U	S	H

ANGELICA
BASIL
BAY
CHIVES
CORIANDER
CURRYLEAVES
ECHINACEA
ELDERFLOWER
FENUGREEK
HORSERADISH
LEMONMYRTLE
LICORICE
NUTMEG
PARSLEY
PEPPERMINT
SAFFRON
SAGE
SALTBUSH
TUMERIC
WATTLESEED

Committee Update

You may recall that several roles in the HSOV committee remained vacant at the Annual General Meeting in November last year. Some great news! Jan Illingworth, has accepted a nomination for President. Jan was Vice President last year and temporarily took on the role after the position was vacant before the AGM. Jan has been working hard for the HOSV, taking walks, presenting talks, was on the Herb Conference committee, even stepping in deliver the last presentation at the Herb Conference when the planned speaker was unable to attend due to illness. Please congratulate and support Jan in the very important President role.

The committee has currently only 5 elected people, plus a couple acting in roles, which is a lot of work for a few people. Consider joining the committee, but if you can't commit to that, please consider other ways to participate and provide support. That may be:

- Helping at monthly events on the plant stall, the teas/supper, setting up or packing up.
- Assisting with our other events
- Organise a walk or other event to share with HSOV or team up with someone else for it. The committee can set up Try Boogie for it to register participants.
- Offer to present a mini talk (a 5 minute presentation) for a monthly event or suggest and a great guest speaker
- Post on our Facebook group, or even better help with our social media.

Many hands make like work, as they say. Any contribution would be appreciated, so please speak with your friendly, hard working committee about how you help - Jan, Marie, Nigel, June or Carmen or email theherbsocietyofvictoria@gmail.com.

A Herbal letter

(Some pronunciation tweaks are necessary when reading this! 😊)

Aloe vera,

Are you and stevia cumin with us on a picnic because it's anise day?

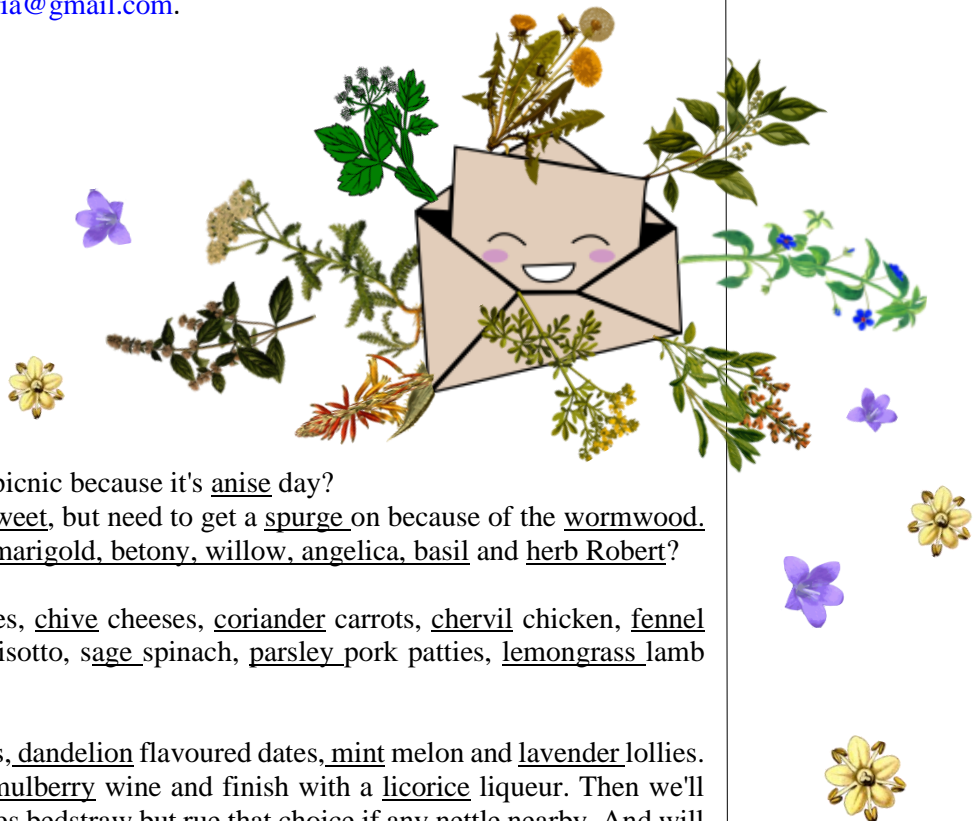
We will go down purslane to meadowsweet, but need to get a spurge on because of the wormwood. How about we invite rosemary, violet, marigold, betony, willow, angelica, basil and herb Robert?

Our feast will consist of savory sardines, chive cheeses, coriander carrots, chervil chicken, fennel fishcakes, chickweed chutney, rocket risotto, sage spinach, parsley pork patties, lemongrass lamb lentils and salad burnett.

For dessert we will enjoy borage biscuits, dandelion flavoured dates, mint melon and lavender lollies. We will drink lemon verbena tea and mulberry wine and finish with a licorice liqueur. Then we'll have a catnip (plural of catnap)? on ladies bedstraw but rue that choice if any nettle nearby. And will keep the flies at bay with tansy.

Sorrel that's all, good evening primrose

June Valentine



Herb Conference

Overview of Presentations Part 1

The Herb Conference, held by the HSOV in October, was a wonderful weekend and so much to learn. For those you missed it or want a refresher, here's an overview of the presentations, taken from my notes. It'll run over a few Herb Age issues, as I took a lot of notes!

Dr Greg Moore “Big Trees, Herbs and Roots”



Greg started his presentation with this amazing picture of an ancient and long harvested river gum, its huge roots exposed as a result of the river having dried up and decades of soil erosion. It defies gravity, the bulk hanging mid-air, suspended on one giant piercing root. It set the tone for a very interesting talk.

Trees can be symbols for people. The world's largest (and most expensive) pot plant is a 150 year old Banyan Tree in Hong Kong. There was a fierce community campaign to keep that tree, earmarked for destruction as it lay in the path of a major railway construction. To enable its preservation, the soil was dug away from the tree and a giant bowl like pot was created to contain it, while development took place under and around it. Much of the solution design was actually from Melbourne.

To have healthy plants, herbs and trees, they need healthy roots. The structure for the plants to grow in must be right, including: Light, Water, Nutrients, Air, Space. Good soil generally has medium structure, supported with mulch.

The root structure of trees is generally not what we might think. When seeds from trees germinate, they grow radical roots, which develop into tap roots. Contrary to popular belief, tap roots are not usually a single huge anchor for the life of the tree. Often the tap root won't persist as lateral roots take over and you never get tap roots when the tree is grown from cuttings. Roots are opportunistic and will grow where the soil is best, with plentiful water and nutrients which means they usually don't go straight down, but tend to be shallow and spreading. Our pictured river gum once grew on the river's edge where deep water was accessible, its roots able to search a long way down.

Roots are multifunctional for plants and their environment. Roots have a symbiotic relationship with mycorrhizal fungi in the soil. These fungi are the latest hot topic in the environment research world and Greg has seen the topic feature in conferences and seminars across the world as more is discovered. A single mycorrhizal fungus in the US has been reported as the largest organism in the world, covering hundreds of hectares. These fungi can cross several trees and are crucial to the development of root hairs and helping the tree with nutrient and water absorption. The trees provide photosynthesised food for the fungi through their roots.

Often when potting up your herbs, you will see hair like ends, but there are even more delicate roots, that we can't see and will have been lost during the potting disturbance. We were shown microscopic photos of these fine roots that were fascinating, showing fungi to a cellular level with the root; ectomycorrhiza (on the outside of the root) and endomycorrhiza (that grow inside the root and into root cells). These also help defend the plant from bad fungi.

From the microscopic to the tall and vast, the world of trees and roots is remarkable. The trees, plants and herbs we see above the ground grow from the roots below. This presentation demonstrated how the health of those roots is of obsolete importance. So look after the soil, to look after the roots to grow the best herbs, plants and trees.

Tony Hosemans – “Native American Indian Herbs”

Tony Hosemans is one of the few people growing rare Native American herbs in Australia. It all started with a chance encounter at his then, café in the Hills outside Melbourne some decades ago, and has developed into an intense passion. This encounter was with Native American Randall "Blue Feather" White, who was looking for a place to grow the healing herbs of his heritage. So Tony offered some of his block, which led to him learning about the traditional practices with these herbs and develop a deep respect.

When Randall headed home, Tony took over the nursery through much trial and error over several years. The core herbs mentioned:

- Dessert Sage and White Sage. Sacred herbs used for spiritual cleansing and the component for Smudge sticks (right) for cleansing houses. Unfortunately, the popularity of Smudge sticks has encouraged plundering native forest and the plant in the wild is becoming endangered. When buying it, be sure to check it is sustainably sourced.
- Golden Seal (right). Used traditionally as a natural anti-biotic and claimed to kill Golden Staph. (A copy of Tony's book "How to grow Golden Seal in Australia" is available to borrow from the HSOV library)
- Black Cohosh and Blue Cohosh. Both women's herbs, the blue variety the better for menopause. The roots are used medicinally, and the corms after it has died down after winter.
- Bearberry. The leaves are harvested in spring and summer for medicinal use, commonly for urinary infections.



As with many potent medicinal plants, these herbs have strong healing powers, along with strong side effects and contraindications and should be used medicinally with consultation of a professional herbalist or naturopath.

Over the years, he developed his 'black magic' potting mix/mulch especially for these herbs to try to replicate the plants' indigenous woodlands soil, using lots of mulched deciduous tree leaves. Many of the pots are grown under the deciduous trees to create a similar environment and shade for summer. Some are slow growing and may take a year to wait for the seed to germinate.

Tony finished his presentation with a song or two. Did I mention he was the singing waiter at his café where he struck up a friendship with "Blue Feather"? Tony also had the herbs for sale on the Saturday of his presentation, a rare opportunity indeed.

Meridith Hutchinson

THA Articles please

A shout out for articles for The Herb Age

You may notice that this issue is a little light on, as there were very few contributions received this issue. Having not much to edit, makes the role of 'editing' rather difficult and leaves me with having to write articles myself. While I quite enjoy my voice in print, it is very time consuming, and gets rather boring for you as you only get to see one viewpoint of the very big world of herbs that the Herb Society of Victoria envelopes.

Please consider what you can contribute to the Herb Age. We all talk or post to friends about something that has plucked our passions in the herb or garden world. So, extend that to HSOV friends and put those words to an article to share in the THA. Articles can be as long or short as you like, with a herb, garden, nature, sustainability theme of interest for other members and if you can include a photo or 2 that does help a lot too. Here's a few suggestions on topics:

The Herb Conference A few months ago now, but there may be pearls you picked up that you have since adapted or have further researched or just found fascinating.

HSOV events We have a guest speaker most monthly events, so what did you take away from the talk? We also have walks, workshops, and lots more to report on. Remember, not every member can make it to those events and they would love to know what happened.

Your own visits to gardens, nature, classes or your garden Is there somewhere you've been, seen or learnt outside HSOV that you can share. Or are there observations from your own garden that bring you joy. Chances are they will for someone else too!

Herbs (of course!) We all have a favourite, but why and how do you use it. Or maybe you've recently heard, read up or learnt about a herb and come away with an 'Ah-ha'. If you've researched information, please add the reference, so others can investigate and learn more too.

Tips These can be tips on how to grow or use herbs or from the garden.

Recipes Who doesn't love a good recipe and herbs feature so often; a photo of the finished creation would be great too.

Poems Herb or garden theme prose. A haiku is short and sweet, just 5 lines!

Book Reviews So many amazing books out there; a quick review can inspire others.

Articles or websites Write about an article or website and tell us what appealed so much. Including a few direct quotes shouldn't breach copyright, but please add the reference.

It's wonderful to get a wide range of views, styles and topics. You can find some incredibly informative articles in archived THAs in the members section on the website, which might inspire you. If you don't already have your login to the Website members section (your email address is your login username and you can use forgotten password if unsure of your password), please email me.

Deadline details for The Herb Age are always on page 3 next to the contents. Please email me your contributions to theherbage@outlook.com or drop a note. No rush; THA needs articles all year round!

My favourite quote is fast becoming that from Clive Larkman at the Herb Conference "Knowledge is only important if you share it". So don't keep knowledge to yourself and thanks so much in advance for sharing with other members of the Herb Society of Victoria.

Meridith Hutchinson, Editor

Heidi Garden Walk

What a relief that the weather was perfect last Sunday (Jan 15th) after the very hot day the day before, and thank goodness the walk was moved from Saturday to Sunday. While there were a few browned or droopy leaves, the gardens at Heide had recovered from the heat beautifully. This walk was originally planned as part of the Herb Conference, deferred due to potential floods in October – you just have to love Melbourne weather!

An ever-growing group of herb enthusiasts gathered at the carpark entrance at 10.30, becoming with a very large group of 39 to take off on the walking tour of the gardens. Elsie Carter led the way (up the garden path!) to the first garden, the kitchen garden that supplies the restaurant. This is the most recently established kitchen garden, close to the old farm house. The original home and artist retreat of John and Sunday Reed from 1934 was established on an old dairy farm; corrugated cows graze on the lawn, a salute to its heritage.

Elsie answered questions on herbs and plants, pointing out some interesting ones, including Clary Sage (pictured above). We spent some time going through the herbs, vegetables and useful plants, all looking lush and well-tended.

Next, we moved onto the rose garden with a lavender path and very old fruit trees surrounding the old farm house. Unfortunately, the hot wind the day before had finished most of the roses, but it was a pleasure to walk through the rest of this garden.

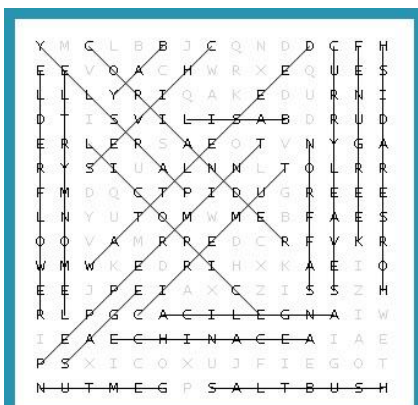
The last garden was the furthest away; down a meandering path, past the new large carpark and behind the towering modern gallery and home built in the mid 1950's, under a canopy of old trees to the original Kitchen Garden.

HSOV can take pride in helping to save this garden from near destruction, when members were called in to assess the garden, while bulldozer sat ready for a gruesome task the next day. The garden's significance was quickly identified and the bulldozers called off. HSOV volunteers assisted with some of the restoration, especially the roses. The last time I was in this garden was 4 years ago in a dry summer, where many plants were struggling. Now the garden is thick with growth, with towering spikes of evening primrose and artichoke flowers.

The day was a relaxed and informal wander through these beautiful grounds. Some of the group came through our meetup and facebook groups and the feedback was very encouraging. Thanks to Audrey for some of the pics on the page. A few of the group popped into the galleries, but most were happy to browse among the lush growth. A very big thankyou to Elsie for suggesting this walk and leading the large group through a very enjoyable day.



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