



**NEWSLETTER
NUMBER 6
December/January 2020**



**NIGELLA,
Love in the mist.**

**OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE HERB SOCIETY OF
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
INCORPORATED**

THE HERB SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED

Society Correspondence: The Secretary, P O Box 140, Fullarton, SA 5063.

Telephone contact: (08) 8445 6645 Email: herbsocietysa@gmail.com

Website – <http://www.herbsocietysa.com.au>

Facebook a Public Group, The Herb Society of South Australia

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President	Sandra Stuart	8445 1626
Vice President	Anthony Medcalf	8356 4512
Secretary	Marianne Piercy	0419 819534
Treasurer	Kath Coombs	0417 453498
Public Officer	Anthony Medcalf	8356 4512
Committee	Suzanne Uppill	8842 3596
John Thompson	Dot Rushton	

The membership year begins from 1st July this year to 30th June next. Members who have not renewed their Membership fees by the 1st October will cease to be a Member of the Society.

Fees are payable to the Membership Secretary at meetings or posted to the Secretary at the Society address, or by Electronic Funds Transfer.

Bank Details: BSB 105 142, Bank SA: Account Number 537176940

Single \$12, Single Concession \$10,

Family \$17, Family Concession \$14.50,

Group \$12

The Herb Society meets on the first Monday of each month from February to December (no meeting in January). Located in the Findon Community Centre, 222 Findon Rd, Findon, at 7.30pm for an 8.00pm start.

Members can borrow newsletters and use the library, sell and purchase plants, seeds, books and other herbal items. Visitors are most welcome. Basket supper is served at the conclusion of the meeting.

Disclaimer: The information contained in “Herb Thymes” is for general interest only. The views expressed may not necessarily be those of the Editor or The Society. The Herb Society of SA Inc. accepts no responsibility for any inaccuracy or in the use of any herb/s by any individual. For the medicinal use of herbs, The Society recommends the use of a suitably qualified practitioner.

Table of Contents

A TIME TO REFLECT.	4
HERB DAY WINNING PRIZES 2019	5
A DILLY-LICIOUS HOME MADE GLYCERITE.....	6
NATIVE MINT	12
NIGELLA, Love in the mist.....	14
RECIPES:.....	14
Ginger Fingers	15
MEETINGS General outline.....	16
AN INVITATION	19
ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY	19
CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2019:	20
EVENTS 2020	20



Hello Herb lovers

The end of the year is here and it is time to give Sandra, Anthony, the committee and volunteers a big thank you for enabling the Herb Day, Propagation days, outings and meetings with guest speakers all to run smoothly.

Another thank you goes to Mary Allen for her article on Glycerites a subject that is totally new to me.
Finally a special thanks to Suzanne Uppill for all the effort she puts

into making our Christmas party such a success. This year's theme 'BINGO' challenged my imagination but once the juices started flowing I was hooked. Now I'm so looking forward to the party where this edition of Herb Thymes will be handed out.

Sending articles, recipes and ideas to share with all our members in our newsletter, the Herb Thymes' helps keep our group vital.

Contact me on 8682 6752 or mobile 0408023524.

or at medley0246@gmail.com

Hand written letters and interesting articles cut from magazines may be sent to 12 Hamp St. Port Lincoln 5606

Next edition deadline for Herb Thymes is February 16th 2020

Happy gardening
Chris Houweling

A TIME TO REFLECT.

2020 marks the beginning of the next decade of the 21st century. It doesn't seem that long ago, that we were welcoming in the new century. Climate change and global warming stories abound in the media and we who garden have noticed the changes that have taken place over the years. Rainfall patterns have changed and we'll have to adapt to the conditions that prevail.

One thing is certain and that is time brings with it continuing changes. During a 4-week period this year, we saw 3 of our members depart for the great herb garden in the sky. First Kath Medcalf passed away after a short illness. She had been a member for 25 years. Kath enjoyed attending meetings, field trips and several of the Australian Herb Conferences. Kath was ever

present at our meetings, first helping with the supper and then coordinating it for many years. She also helped at the Herb Day selling raffle tickets.

Trevor White had been a member for 29 years. He was our caretaker at the Toogood Avenue Sensory Garden for the 20 years the Society tended it. He organized the layout at Herb Day and helped to cart the multitude of items that the Herb Society needed transporting. Trevor was active in the wider community, assisting many organisations and causes, as well as standing up for the little people against the tide of bureaucracy from the local council.

Beryl Gibbs was a member for 13 years. Although she wasn't always able to attend meetings, she enjoyed attending Herb Day and receiving 'Herb Thymes'. Beryl was active in several garden clubs and was widely known in them. To all their families and friends, we send our deepest sympathy. For those who knew them, they will be sorely missed.

Anthony Medcalf.

HERB DAY WINNING PRIZES 2019

- 1 st Prize Garden Cart and fertilisers Winning ticket Red F68 Winner Simon Ardle
- 2 nd Prize Basket full of goods and books Winning ticket Purple E34 Winner Jim Mitchell
- 3 rd Prize Neutro fertilisers Winning ticket Pink J45 Winner Margot
- 4 th Prize Grassroot Subscription Winning ticket Red E24 Winner Shirley

- 5 th Prize Tray and Magazine Rag Winning ticket Green A81 Winner Ivetta
- 6 th Prize Ceramic Plant label Winning ticket Purple T33 Winner M. Briggs
- 7 th Prize Ceramic Plant label Winning ticket Red C46 Winner Brett Kennewell
- 8 th Prize Ceramic Plant label Winning ticket Green B88 Winner Janet
- 9 th prize Cut Above Apron Winning ticket Pink J43 Winner Margot
- 10 th prize Secateurs Winning ticket Red F58 Winner Elizabeth
- 11 th Prize Secateurs Winning Ticket Pink J20 Winner Pam Pigeon
- 12 th Prize Secateurs Winning ticket Blue A95 Winner Bruce
- 13 th Prize Lavender pots & hanging tile Winning ticket Black F44 Winner Joyce Hopegood
- 14 th Prize Basil pot and hanging tile Winning ticket Apricot G93 Winner Pam Pigeon
- 15 th Prize Three hand painted pots Winning ticket Blue F51 Winner Mell & Dan
- 16 th Prize Oliva's gift voucher Winning ticket Apricot G91 Winner Ange
- 17 th Prize Oliva's gift voucher Winning ticket Red F64 Winner Simon Ardle
- 18 th Prize Seasol fertilisers Winning ticket Black A8 Winner Tony Harding
- 19 th Prize Bush Tucker fertiliser Winning ticket Green B59 Winner Sue Shanno

A DILLY-LICIOUS HOME MADE GLYCERITE

By Mary Allan – Medical Herbalist

Dill (*Anethum graveolens*)

The name ‘dill’ derives from the Norse word *dylla* ‘to soothe’ and indeed dill is a very gentle herb used traditionally with babies and infants for tummy upsets especially colic and flatulence. The seed (actually the fruit) is the most active part medicinally and the leaf is often used in cooking. Dill oil was the active ingredient in ‘gripe water’, a famous infant colic remedy invented in 1851 by William Woodward, many variations on this have developed since. Dill has a very long history and is mentioned in *Ebers papyrus* around 1500 BC. Dill is an excellent example of where food and medicine intersect and is a very safe herb suitable for young and old alike.

Medicinally, Dill goes well with herbs such as chamomile, lemon balm, fennel and ginger, all of which are soothing for gastrointestinal upsets.

What is a Glycerite?

A traditional glycerite (or ‘glycetract’) is a herbal extract made in a base of *glycerine*. Although glycerine is arguably a poor solvent compared to alcohol, it is useful for extracting and stabilising essential oils, it prevents precipitation of tannins in your mixes and is sweet and easy on the palate especially compared to tinctures and vinegars. Glycerine is a thick syrupy liquid with broad applications and is therefore used in many different industries, its uses are as diverse as making dynamite to making soap. It is also used as a key ingredient in personal care products where it is often added to moisturising creams and skin care products because it is an effective ‘humectant’ which means it helps the skin to retain moisture. Although it is 60% as sweet as table sugar, it is not actually a sugar, it is a tri-atomic ‘alcohol’ (in the scientific sense an OH group in this case ‘glycerol’) made up of triglycerides, as such it is very unlikely to flare up yeast infections or cause major blood sugar fluctuations although

diabetics should be watchful as there is some evidence suggesting it can (rarely) cause blood sugar spikes. The food industry considers it to have a caloric density similar to table sugar, but as it has a lower glycaemic index it can be included in low carb diets.

Not all glycerine is the same, there is a large range in quality no doubt because of the broad range of potential uses. Natural glycerine is made from the fats and oils of plants or animals, glycerol being the backbone of many lipids or fat molecules. To make it is a complicated process and it is often a by-product of the soap manufacturing industry. Typical plant sources include coconut, soy and palm oil hence the importance of getting organic BioGro glycerine. Although it is made from fats, glycerine is soluble in water and alcohol but not fats and oils. It is straightforward to source quality vegetable glycerine from raw material suppliers here in New Zealand, I purchase a BioGro organic glycerine from a local supplier which is non-GMO and contains no palm oil derivatives. Make sure you source one that is graded for internal use. Incidentally, for the medicine makers among you, did you know glycerine can be added to hydroethanolic extractions at about 5-10%, to aid the essential oil extraction, I put it in my lemon balm, peppermint and cinnamon tinctures and I also recently made one with Kawakawa.

Making a Fresh Plant Glycerite

There are a few different methods of making a glycerite extract, here I am sharing a simple way to make a fresh extract at home without commercial equipment. I haven't really played around with glycerites all that much as I was satisfied with alcohol, water and vinegar as water soluble solvents. Still, I decided this time to use the 'seal simmer' method, especially since I was using a plant rich in essential oils so I followed herbalist Thomas Easley's

excellent guidelines from his medicine making book ‘The Modern Herbal Dispensatory’.

Practical Considerations

Because glycerine is so thick and sticky it can be challenging to work with. It is therefore usually necessary to thin it out with either alcohol or water - unless your herb is especially juicy. Glycerine is not effective as a menstruum for resinous, oily or mucilaginous plants.

Regarding preservation of the final product, older guidelines recommend 50% glycerine in a glycerine/water mix to enable it to act as a preservative, but many herbalists experienced with this medium suggest to be on the safe side you should have at least 60% of glycerine in the finished product or mould will form on the top. Using fresh plant material makes it tricky to work this out because of its existing water content, I ended up making a 1:4 weight to volume ratio in a 70/30 glycerine/water base to make up for the water content in the fresh plant. As it was a trial run I made a small batch, here’s what that looked like:

Ingredients

50g fresh herb – dill leaf and fine stalk (clean and garbled)

140ml glycerine

60ml filtered water

Jar to fit the ingredients with only a small amount of space at the top

Method

1. Put your pot or preserving pan of water on the heat
2. While the water is beginning to heat, put your herb and liquids into a blender and give a quick whizz
3. Pour into a small preserving jar, the herbs should come almost to the top, you only want about an inch of space at

the top so the volatile oils are recirculated as much as possible

4. Put the lid on the jar
5. Place something in the bottom of the pot of water for the jar to sit on, a few preserving jar rings work quite well
6. Carefully place the jar in the pot of warm water, I put the water about $\frac{3}{4}$ the way up the jar
7. Bring the heat up to boiling, and simmer gently 15 minutes
8. Remove from heat, let cool enough to handle, then strain, bottle and label.
9. Storage is important, keep it in a cool dark place, even a fridge and wipe any drips off the sides of the bottle. A carefully made, suitably stored glycerite should keep for a couple of years.

This is truly delicious, I gave it to my teenage assistant and she loved it which is testament to its goodness if there ever was one! My only regret was I didn't put the dill seed I had gathered in summer into the mix as this contains a higher amount of aromatic oils and is more often used traditionally as medicine ...ah well, next time... it's such an ever evolving process making medicine.

Dosage

Fresh herb glycerites are significantly less concentrated than dried herb tinctures, so the doses are correspondingly higher, but I would still recommend diluting this as it does taste quite strong. For a baby just 0.5-1ml glycerite should be plenty, taken as often as needed. For toddlers increase up to 2.5ml of glycerite. Dilute into a small amount of warm water and give directly from a dropper or spoon. You can dilute with chamomile tea or a herbal digestive tea to augment and synergise its effects.

Digestive herbs

Many herbs have a beneficial effect on the digestion and using them in your day to day cooking goes a long way to maintaining good health whilst medicinal doses can be very effective at dealing with a wide range of specific digestive issues.

I hope this has inspired you to get into the garden and prepare your summer crops. You can use the seal simmer method with many herbs including chamomile of course, but also medicinal aromatic herbs from the Apiaceae family such as caraway, coriander, fennel or aniseed, or deliciously scented Lamiaceae herbs such as lemon balm, lavender, catmint, peppermint or rosemary are especially good contenders!

So there we have it, get yourself a container of organic glycerine and get ready for the spring and summer harvests!

Bibliography

Easley, T., & Horne, S. (2016). *The modern herbal dispensatory: A medicine-making guide*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.

Van Wyk, B. and Wink, M. (2010). *Medicinal plants of the world*. 1st ed. London: Timber Press, Inc.

Santich, R., & Bone, K. (2008). *Phytotherapy essentials: healthy children: optimising children's health with herbs*. Warwick, Qld.: Phytotherapy Press.

Mary is a holistic health practitioner with diploma and degree qualifications in herbal medicine, naturopathy and yoga therapy. She sees patients from her home clinic in Browns Bay, Auckland. She also works part time for the Southern Institute of Medical Herbalism (SIMH). If you would like to make an appointment with Mary please contact her via email at: clinic@solsticeherbs.co.nz

NATIVE MINT

Family Lamiaceae

Mentha australis

Common name: wild mint native mint

Aboriginal name poang-gurk

ORIGIN:

River mint is a rambling native herb found in most forests and waterways across south east Australia. A summer grower, it especially thrives after floods, often on riverbanks or in bogs. Also known as wild mint, in fact it's one of a half dozen native mints, it's an aromatic if slightly subtler relative of more familiar exotic herbs like spearmint and peppermint and can be used in the same way.

DESCRIPTION:

A low growing Perennial river mint has soft small leaves compared to more exotic mints growing in pairs on long-running branches. There are white to mauve flowers in summer and autumn. A subtropical plant.

PROPAGATION:

It is easy propagated by cuttings or by transplanting the Runners. It does well in most low light areas where little else will grow and needs little feeding.

It grows to about 30 cm high and 170 m wide and given correct conditions of soil and lots of water, it will spread far and wide if allowed to run wild. It could be called leggy with its long runners but does respond well to pruning.

It's easier to control it in a container or with a root barrier. Even when confined to a pot it's fresh minty scent is pervasive and irresistible. Harvest the leaves as required or simply take whole

stalks, chop and dry them for later use - but as with any herb it's best used fresh.

USES:

Indigenous people who knew it as poang-gurk, used it as flavour additive insect repellent and medicine, Inhaling its crushed leaves to treat colds and sore throats and to relieve headaches.

The early settlers used it as a substitute for common garden mint.

Jackie Anstis editor of The Blue Mountains And Nepean Herb Group. The Pot Pourri Newsletter, emailed the following.

'I had seen the article on Native Mint in the Good Organic Gardening. I actually have a bucket of it growing out the front under the crimson bottlebrush. It dies down and sulks over winter and then rockets away once the warmer weather comes. I have to get to and plant up some runners.'

High-Temperature Cooking & The World's Healthiest Foods.

One of the greatest insults to nourishment in our modern, fast-paced, and processed food culture is the high heat at which so much of our food is cooked. We deep fat fry at 200-250C degrees; we fry on the stovetop in shortening and vegetable oils right up until their smoke points of 220-250C degrees; and we barbecue with gas grills that can reach temperatures of over 540C degrees! This exposure of food to high heat may be convenient and quick, and it may fill the air with aromas that we savour, but it comes at a definite nutritional cost. Our food just wasn't designed to withstand extremely high temperatures. Neither was the nutrients contained within our food.

REF: www.whfoods.com

NIGELLA, Love in the mist.



Most widely cultivated in India.

Harvest seed capsules as they ripen but before they burst, when the dry capsules crush easily and seeds can be removed.

The aroma and taste is nutty and acrid, like a cross between poppy seeds and pepper. It is reminiscent of oregano.

To heighten its flavour and aroma the seeds are first roasted before grinding. Use to spice vegetables and pulses. Sprinkle on or in bread. Compliments the spices coriander and allspice and the herbs winter or summer savory and thyme.



REF: p48 Spices Jill Norman ISBN 0-86318-487-1

Iris of Florence

The scented rhizome of the fragrant slate grey iris ‘Florentina’ has been treasured for many centuries. When it is dried, it releases a long lasting violet like scent. ‘Powder of Florence Iris’, also known orrisroot, was once added to the laundry rinsing water to bring perfume to the clothes. The dried rhizome is also a very effective perfume fixative, and is still used as an ingredient of potpourri.

Divide rhizomes every three to five years, after flowering. Before the irises become crowded and blooming is inhibited.

RECIPES:

Special request from Di H

Ginger Fingers

Oven 150°, cooking time 35mins

- 250g soft butter
- 90g caster sugar.
- 100g chopped macadamia nuts.
- 100g glace ginger, finely sliced.
- 2 cups plain flour
- ½ cup rice flour

Beat butter and sugar to a cream.
Mix in ginger and nuts.
Add the combined sifted flours.
Mix to a dough and then gather into a ball.
Roll out in a rectangle, 1 cm thick.
Cut into 3x7cm fingers, lay on a tray and sprinkle with caster sugar.
(or use a small ice-cream scoop, press flat with a fork).

Variation: Replace combined weight of ginger and nuts – 200g with pecan nuts, ginger and chocolate, chopped fine.

MEETINGS General outline.

A concise outline of points of interest to those who did not attend the following meetings. The full minutes are available at General meetings.

COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 19/8/19

GROUP REPORTS:

SALVIA GARDENING GROUP.

Anthony, Meryl and Rod have potted on plants for the Spring Salvia Sale which will be on Sunday 27th October. So far the Friends of the Botanic Gardens, Rod McArthur and the Briggs will be bringing plants.

SEED SAVERS GROUP:

Next meeting 5th September with the following one in October.

SPEAKERS PANEL:

- Sue is organising the Christmas meeting, with the theme being BINGO – Basil, Iris, Nepata, Garlic chives, Oregano.
- John is arranging a speaker on compost for April.
- HERB DAY:
- Baskets and other items have been contributed for prizes.
- Plants needed.

TRIPS: Port Lincoln

- Departure: meeting at 7.45 am at the Rex terminal.
- Returning 6.15pm

GENERAL BUSINESS:

- Lijan will help out with the propagating workshop.

- John to add Herb Society events to Jon Lambs weekly mail-out of coming events.
- John to do Facebook administration.
- John to access emails while Kath is away.
- The home page on the website is now showing three upcoming meetings.

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 2/9/19

HERB DAY: All donations for prizes now received.

SEED SAVERS GROUP:

Next meeting 5th September at 7.30 pm.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

Propagating workshop will be from 2.00-4.00pm on Sunday 15th September.

the theme for the Christmas meeting is BINGO:

– Basil – Iris – Nepata - Garlic chives - Oregano.

THE GUEST SPEAKER: Ollie Black spoke about St. Bede's Community Garden in Semaphore.

COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 30/9/19

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

Trip to St. Bede's Community Garden to be arranged.

SECRETARY'S REPORT/CORRESPONDENCE:

Anthony Medcalf, letter of thanks for his card.

SPEAKERS PANEL:

- October – Les Nesbitt on native orchids.
- November – Cath McMahon on seagrass.
- February – possible talk and pictures Port Lincoln trip.

TRIPS:

Possible trip to St. Bede's Community Garden on 18th April. to be confirmed. Lunch at pub suggested.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

- Jon Lamb's weekly mail-out: John to arrange.

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 7/10/19

HERB DAY:

- Return raffle books by Herb Day.
- Bring Food for morning tea.
- Bring pots for Herb Stall.

FINDON GARDEN:

Thirty visitors had a happy and informative time at the Propagation Workshop on Sunday 25th September, potting up herbs and salvia's.

TRIPS:

Port Lincoln trip 20th -22nd September: eight members flew across and were met by Christine and Fred Houweling and Heather Curtis, who took the group around to the gardens and other sights. A very full trip.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

Obituaries:

- Sandra spoke about the death of Kath Medcalf on 20th September and gave a tribute gift to Anthony.
- Trevor White died on 25th September. There will be a cuppa and chat on 13th October at the Grange Baptist Church, 47 Beach st, Grange. Flowers were sent to Melva.
- Board for food donations for Christmas meeting was

circulated.

THE GUEST SPEAKER:

Les Nesbitt gave a very informative talk on native orchids.



**AN INVITATION TO THE HERB
SOCIETY'S**

**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY
THE THEME THIS YEAR IS BINGO;
B asil I ris N epeta G arlic
chives O regano**

A night of entertainment and fun. Quizzes with heaps of prizes. Looking forward to seeing you all there.

DATE: MONDAY 2ND DECEMBER 2019

TIME: 7.30 pm

DRESS: BINGO FANCY COSTUME

PLACE: FINDON COMMUNITY CENTRE.

BRING: A PLATE OF FOOD TO SHARE FOR SUPPER.

HOSTED BY SUZANNE UPPILL

Bingo just like that it came to me
As a team each one of you can be
the star the winner of the day
you are all wonderful I say

for a special sauce that's robust
Basil, oregano, garlic you're a must
Iris will preserve summer's bloom
for us to enjoy in winters gloom
and Nepata, catmint now your turn
your leaves as incense we'll burn
food sense moods are fulfilled
and that makes me thrilled.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2019:

DECEMBER

Monday 2nd General meeting 7.30pm & Christmas Party. DATE:
Time: 7.30 Pm
Dress: Bingo Fancy Costume
Place: Findon Community Centre.
Bring: A Plate of Food To Share For Supper.

EVENTS 2020

3rd-5th April Expo Wayville
Sunday 19th April propagating Findon 2-4pm
Sun 26th April Salvia Sale Fullarton 8.30am-12noon
Sun 13th Sept. propagating Findon 2-4pm
Sun 25th Oct. Salvia Sale Fullarton 10am to 3pm.