



**NEWSLETTER
NUMBER 1
February/March 2020**



Soapwort/Bouncing Bet
Saponaria officinalis

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

THE HERB SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED

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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.

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Vale - Robin Mackenzie - 29th December 2019

A significant member of the Herb Society since 1998, holding the official position of treasurer for many years.

Rob was instrumental in my becoming a member of the Herb Society. I met him in 2008, at the Adelaide Royal Show where he was manning The Herb Societies stall, giving a blow by blow description of how to grow a continuous supply of coriander to a customer.

I was very impressed and when it was my turn, we started to chat and before long I was loaded up with lots of old copies of herb thymes and the current one with the details of the 2008 Tasmanian herb conference.

A few weeks later I joined the tour and continued my acquaintance with Rob and met his lovely wife Inta, a life member of the herb society. Rob wrote many informative and interesting articles for the Herb Thymes. His knowledge and familiar presence, I know will be missed by us all.

My love and thoughts go out to Inta and her family.
Chris Houweling.

Vale

Thomas ‘Robin’ Mackenzie

27/4/1933 to 29/12/2019

It was with much sadness to report of the recent passing of one of our ‘Life’ members, Robin Mackenzie.

Robin and his wife Inta joined the Herb Society in April 1998. He was not just a member, but actively involved in the Society from the very beginning.

Robin became the Treasurer of the Society in 2000. His diligence and expertise was noted right from the start. He looked over our finances and updated our system by using his computer. He produced detailed accounts and established the 'Founding Fund', made up of money raised by the Australian Herb Conferences held in Adelaide. This money was invested and the interest used to fund a wide variety of community projects in Adelaide and country regions. The money helped, and continues to do so, many groups establish and maintain herb and community gardens.

Robin was involved with the Sensory Garden at Toogood Avenue. He later helped to establish a sensory garden at Alwyndor Nursing Home. There he, Inta and several members of the Herb Society tended the garden for many years until it became necessary to pass on the work to others.

Robin was involved with the SSS, a social group of the Scouts Association. At Woodhouse in the Adelaide Hills, he established a salvia garden. This was part experiment, to see how these plants would grow in this particular region. For many years it provided an interesting site to observe the salvias and an enjoyable get together while tending the garden.

Robin retired from the Treasurer's position in 2013 but still continued to be actively involved in Herb Society meetings, herb gardens and other activities. He assisted Inta for many years at Herb Day with the book stall.

He was given a Life Membership to the Herb Society for his services to the Society.

Over the last couple of years, Robin began to slow down and wasn't able to be as active as he wanted. He was hospitalised in

late November and after a short illness passed away on 29th December 2019. He was 86.

Robin will be remembered as a caring, active and involved person. He was never one to shirk responsibility. He offered his opinion freely but was fair to others. He was always there if you needed him. He established many friendships with Society members and was well respected by others. We can be grateful for the contribution that he provided to the Society over many years. He will be sadly missed.

Anthony Medcalf.



Hello Herb lovers

Herbs and Herbalism - and maybe a timeline that was my first thought for the 2020 theme for our Herb Thymes newsletter.

But this proved too complex for me – however, the research led to *The National Geographic magazine 1- 2019 Unlocking THE EMPEROR'S MEDICINE CHEST - by Peter Gwin.*

It is a brilliant article and details how Research scientists have taken TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) ancient herbal remedies, scientifically analysed them and produced modern drugs.

My idea is to profile these herbs for 2020.

Happy gardening, Chris Houweling

Hand written letters and articles may be sent to 12 Hamp St. Port Lincoln 5606 or phone me on 8682 6752 or mobile 0408023524. or at medley0246@gmail.com

Groups such as Friends **of Science in Medicine (FSM)** do not acknowledge China's 2000-year history of Herbalism.

John Dwyer, emeritus professor of medicine at the University of NSW and founding president of (FSM), a group formed in 2011 to combat the use of - as they see it - "non-proven alternative therapies". Along with public-health advocate Dr Ken Harvey,

Dwyer has been the group's most strident voice, attacking the "non-evidence based pseudo-science" of the complementary and alternative medicines industry and endeavouring to have certain courses removed from higher education.

In an email sent two years ago to a list of National Health & Medical Research Council reviewers - those appointed by NHMRC to assess applications for funding - Dwyer made it clear that FSM wanted to see "nonsense" such as "homoeopathy, reflexology, kinesiology, healing touch therapy, chiropractic, acupuncture, iridology and energy medicine" removed from tertiary courses and for vice chancellors and deans to heed the call from his roster of "prominent scientists and clinicians". (In April this year, the NHMRC released a review into homoeopathy and concluded there was no reliable evidence for its effectiveness in treating health conditions.)

In contrast traditional medicine remained the primary form of healthcare in China until the early 20th century, when the last Qing Emperor was overthrown by Sun Yet-sen, a Western-trained doctor who promoted science based medicine. Today Chinese physicians are trained and licensed according to state of the art medical practices. Yet traditional medicine remains a vibrant part of the state healthcare system. Most Chinese hospitals have a ward devoted to ancient cures. Citing traditional medicine's potential to lower costs and yield innovative treatments, not to mention raising Chinese prestige, President Xi Jinping has made it a key part of the country's health policy. He has called the 21st-century a new golden age for traditional medicine.

REF:

Wikipedia and Sydney Morning Herald 18/12/14 Marcus Blackmore: the medicine man

NHMRC - National Health and Research Council.

How Ancient Chinese Remedies Are Changing Modern Health Care.

Research scientists have taken TCM ancient herbal remedies, scientifically analysed them to produce modern drugs.

Obtaining accreditation from the FDA of USA (Food and Drug Administration) is another matter.

To get the greenlight, a drug has to go through three phases of testing for safety and efficacy, before the authority will review all the trial data and investigate whether the drug is suitable for the U.S. market. The entire process usually takes eight to 10 years and costs at least \$100 million.

The FDA has approved the following drugs, each made from a single herb.

- Veregen, developed by German firm Medigene AG, an ointment for external genital and perianal warts made from green tea extract.
(Approved October 31, 2006)
- Fulyzaq, a tablet containing the sap of a South American tree. It is used to treat diarrhoea suffered by people living with HIV.
- Artemisin derived from Wormwood *Artemisia* annual to treat malaria.

REF: The National Geographic magazine 1- 2019 Unlocking THE EMPEROR'S MEDICINE CHEST - by Peter Gwin.
Coco Feng CX Daily (Caixin) Drugs.com

The Story of “Artemisin”

Tu Youyou is a chemist in the people’s Republic of China who studied at the Peking University in Beijing. Since 1965 she has worked at the China Academy of Traditional Chinese Medicine, where she is now Chief Scientist. Tu is married and has two daughters.

During the Vietnam war, Tu worked on a secret military project to help Vietcong combat malaria. The disease accounted for roughly half their casualties. After screening more than 200,000 compounds, Tu wondered if an answer might lie in classical Chinese medical texts (TCM).

She tested several plants related to fever and found a remedy based on a herb called wormwood (*Artemisia annua*). The drug derived from her research, called artemisin has been credited with saving millions of lives and earned her the 2015 Noble Prize for Medicine.

1 Wormwood (Artemisia annua).



Artemisia annua

sweet wormwood, sweet annie, Qing Ho or annual wormwood.

Origin: Native to temperate Asia.

Description: a summer annual. The stem is brownish or violet brown. The plant itself is hairless, 30 to 100cm tall, and in cultivation may reach 200 cm. Leaves 3-5 cm are divided by deep cuts into two or three small leaflets. Leaves have intense charismatic

aromatic scent. Green, yellowish, flowers, 2-2.5mm. They are arranged in loose panicles.

Propagation:

20 to 25C sunny and warm, needs deep soil and good drainage. Plant is harvested when flowers are in bud.

Constituents: Artemisinin

NB: seeds are available in Australia.

Camellia sinensis, common name Green Tea.

Green tea is made from leaves and buds that have not undergone the same withering and oxidation process used to make oolong teas and black teas. Green tea originated in China, but its production and manufacture has spread to many other countries in Asia.

Several varieties of green tea exist, which differ substantially based on the variety of *C. sinensis* used, growing conditions, horticultural methods, production processing, and time of harvest. Although there has been considerable research on the possible health effects of consuming green tea regularly, there is little evidence that drinking green tea has any effects on health.

Soapwort/Bouncing Bet

Saponaria officinalis

Description:

Soapwort is a hardy perennial with upright stems, 30 to 40 cm high. It has pairs of oval pointed leaves and pink or white flowers

4 cm wide in dense clusters appearing from mid-summer to mid-autumn.

Parts Used: Flowers, leaves, stems and roots.

Habitat and Cultivation:

Native to Europe and western Asia. Introduced and naturalised elsewhere. It grows on moist but well drained soil in waste ground and along road sides up to 1500 m in altitude. Occurs in the wild. It is grown horticulturally from seed sown in mid spring or by division of the rhizome like stems.

It will tolerate poor soils and grows well in Port Lincoln with little watering.

Key Constituents: Saponins comprising saporubin and saporubrinic acid, gums, flavonoids, vitamin C and vitexin.

History: it was first used by the Syrians and is still used in the middle east.

Uses: Culinary: the flowers are added to salads and used to produce a head in beer making.

Medicinal: the fresh leaves and dried root stock are used as a diuretic, laxative, to stimulate an aid the release of bile from the gallbladder. The rhizome is toxic and must be specially prepared for internal use.

Other notes:

The rhizome, stem and leaves can contain saponins and are used as a source of soap. The soapwort (leaves, stems and roots) boiled

in soft water produce a soapy liquid which is used by museums for cleaning and vitalising old fabrics, tapestries and rare, delicate lace. Also known as or latherwort.

Fuller's earth once used by workers, called a Fuller in the woollen industry as an effective gentle cleanser. (the soapwort extract is combined with urine and a clay such as montmorillonite).

Keep in a large pot so it does not overtake your yard.

Editor's note. I boiled leaves and stems as described before trying the liquid as a cleaner. The soapwort liquid removed grease and marks in the house with ease. Then I wiped the cover of "Scammell's Treasure House of Useful Knowledge" 1889 to reveal the gold embossing hidden beneath a protective layer of dirt. **Caution**, use rubber gloves. Experimentations continue – updates in next edition.

RECIPES:

from Jim Mitchell a member of the Herb Society and a regular helper at the annual Herb Day in November.

"On more than one occasion, I have baked something for sale at the Herb Day cafe.

At the most recent Herb Day, various members suggested I share the recipe by sending it to you – hopefully, for inclusion in an edition of "Herb Thymes." So Here t'is.

Good luck, and enjoy!

Oaty Sultana Slice

1 cup rolled oats
1 cup plain flour
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sultanas
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup raw sugar
125g butter
2 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons water
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda

Grease a 25cm x 30cm Swiss roll pan.

Combine oats, sifted flour, sultanas and sugar in a large bowl. Combine butter, honey and water in a saucepan; stir over heat until butter is melted; stir in soda; pour into dry ingredients and stir until combined.

Press mixture evenly into prepared pan.

Bake in moderate oven for about 25 minutes; cool in pan before cutting.

(Note: To get a sufficient quantity for a party, I triple all the amounts and used 2 roll pans; the slices were somewhat thicker as a consequence and needed slightly longer to cook (30 minutes at 180°C in a fan-forced electric oven)).

(Acknowledgement: the recipe is modified from “Oaty Coconut Slice” found in the Australian Women’s Weekly publication, “Cakes and Slices.”)

GF Seed Biscuits

100g Pumpkin seeds.
100g Sunflower seeds.
100g Sesame seeds.
60g flaxseeds
3 tablespoon psyllium husks
400ml water
1 teaspoon salt.

- preheat oven to 150C
- In a mixing bowl combine all ingredients and leave until it is thick and pliable about 10 to 15 minutes.
- Spread mixture out as thinly as possible with an icing blade. make sure there are no holes. 2 reasonable sized trays.
- They usually take 1 hour and 20 minutes. Once lightly brown and crisp remove from oven, score and leave to cool.
- Eat straight as a nibble or serve with soft cheese such as blue or white Costello.

'The Herball or Generall Historie of Plants', book, London, England, 1633. One of the oldest traditions in medicine is herbalism or botanical medicine. The Egyptians used herbs such as myrrh and garlic as medicine over 3000 years ago.

Saffron's reputation as the most expensive spice in the world is because of the growing process. Only a small part of the saffron flower—the stigmata—is actually used for the spice. So it takes some 75,000 saffron flowers to make just one pound of spice.

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 30/9/19

GROUP REPORTS:

SECRETARY'S REPORT/CORRESPONDENCE:

- Art and Roses at the Cedars, 10th November.
- Garden Clubs of Australia get-together, 8th November.
Motion: 'that the report be accepted'. Moved/Seconded:
Marianne/John Carried.

SPEAKERS PANEL:

- October-Les Nesbitt on Native Orchids
- November - Cath McMahon on seagrass
- February – possible talk and pictures of Port Lincoln trip.

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 7/10/19 in last newsletter.

COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 21/10/19

GROUP REPORTS:

SALVIA GARDENING GROUP:

- Spring Salvia Sale, Sunday 27th October
Labels given out
Simon Ardill, Loraine Thompson, Robyn Powell, Friends of the Botanic Gardens and Herb Society will provide salvias.

TRIPS: St Bede's Community Garden, potential date 18th April to be checked next year 2020.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

- Woodville High School: New plans would destroy a large percentage of their garden. Brian Noone has requested for the Herb Society to respond, writing to the school council. Marianne to write letter
- Greenacres Childcare Centre have requested speaker and help with herbs. Sandra to ring and assess need.

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 4/11/19

SALVIA GARDENING GROUP: Spring sale was successful.

- 330 pots sold
- \$756 for Salvias.
- \$66 books banked

GENERAL BUSINESS:

- The letter sent to governing council of Woodville High school re Horticultural Centre was read out, and background information on situation given.
- Rocky River Garden club is winding up.
- Sandra spoke to Waikerie Garden club on 15th of October. Sales of books, plants and seeds totalled \$166.50.

Editor:

Has anyone some jokes that I can use as fill-ins?
or maybe a tale about your favourite herb or recipe!

A dialogue between a weed and a gardener.

I'm 'Common' do you Say?
well if you must you may
but I'm low in maintenance
with a pleasant countenance
besides luscious, loquacious
and a trifle precocious

I may not be to your taste
but I'm an asset not waste
your calls of 'hooker-tart'
hurt but you to are a fart

I'm not into nasty names
that's your call not my game
but when I called for a truce
his faced coloured to puce
and he scarpered like a shot
when I offered him a herbal tot.

Chris Houweling

AUTUMN SALVIA SALE.

WHEN: Sunday April 26th 2019 - TIME: 8.30 to 12noon

**WHERE: Fullarton Park Community Centre,
Corner of Fullarton Rd and Fisher St. Fullarton**

For all those Salvia lovers and anyone who is looking for an economic & colourful way to add to your garden, come down and choose from a large selection of Salvia's but be quick we do sell out! FREE ENTRY

The Herb Society of South Australia's general meetings are open to everyone. Why not bring a friend?

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2020:

FEBRUARY:

Monday 3rd General Meeting 7.30pm.

MARCH:

Monday 2nd General Meeting 7.30pm

St Bede's Community Garden Visit

Sunday 29th March 10am details below.

Next edition deadline for Herb Thymes is March 23rd 2020

APRIL:

Monday 6th General Meeting 7.30pm

Guest Speaker;

Thursday 9th, 7.30pm to 9.30pm Seed Group

3rd-5th April Expo Wayville

Sunday 19th April propagating Findon 2-4pm

Sun26th April Salvia Sale Fullarton 8.30am-12noon

MAY:

Monday 4th General Meeting 7.30pm

JUNE:

Monday 1st General Meeting 7.30pm

Speaker – Chris Houweling.

Thursday June 4th 7.30pm to 9.30pm Seed Group

ST BEDE'S COMMUNITY GARDEN VISIT

Sunday 29th March 10am

200 Military Rd Semaphore.

Ollie Black is showing us around the garden situated next to the hall.

From there we visit the Semaphore Garden Shop
119 Semaphore Rd.

Next door is Sarah's Sisters Cafe which is vegetarian, where we have lunch and hopefully have a talk on community gardens and sustainable gardening.

This looks a great trip, don't forget to put it in your diary!