

Lavender Link

Quarterly newsletter for Association members

Issue 63

Autumn 2016

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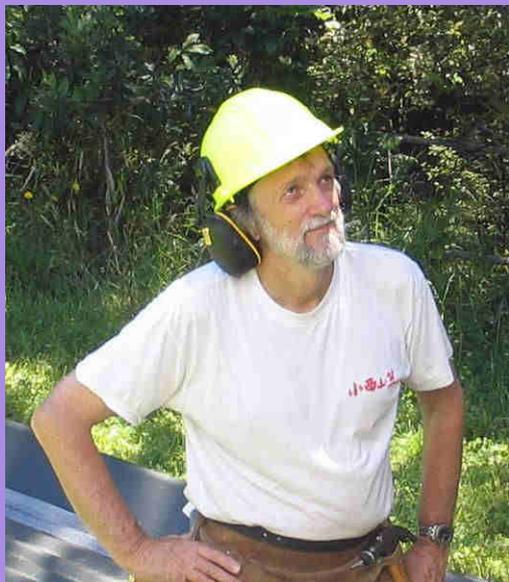
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Pacific Blue

Chairman's Chatter



To research, develop AND promote lavender essential oil and associated products of the highest quality

Report from the Chair

I hear that many of our South Island members had a severe frost in early spring which would have had a big effect on this year's yield. I know many were still distilling well into February. It is also very pleasing to hear Farmers Corner have harvested and distilled all their Intermedia with Keith and Charlotte, with a view to selling the oil on to members who are short this year. I believe the North Island harvest has been typical with normal yields. I know our own farm on Great Barrier Island had a good season and harvested more this year than previous years, but our plants are still not fully mature.

During the year I try to have an executive meeting via Skype conference call approximately every month but with a break between November to February. This is so we can concentrate on our harvest and business. Unfortunately our break was interrupted with the National Health Products Bill and the call for submissions. It appeared that this bill would introduce a registration system for all products along with a manufacturing license system with the associated compliance costs.

For many of our small manufacturers the compliance costs could add an unsustainable cost to these businesses as well as reducing product choice and innovation. Because our Executive members are spread thought-out the country it was decided that Pauline Livesy, Mike Alspach and myself would meet to formulate a submission on behalf of the association.

From our discussions it was decided the best approach was to make a submission based on having low risk products, i.e., products that are not taken or prescribed, exempted from these regulations. There is some precedence for this position with some exemption categories discussed in the ministry's discussion document. Submissions originally were to close 4th February but have been extended by 4 weeks due to increasing public awareness. This bill should not affect where lavender is used as a flavour in food as this would come under the Food Regulations Bill.

I hope many of you took time to sign the petition to keep access to natural nutrients in New Zealand that have a proven safety record and therapeutic benefit, details which I emailed the membership on 26th January. Many thanks for all that signed. I see that over 6,300 have signed which is getting near the target of 7,500

Website update

Our new website is up and running and I hope everyone has had a look.

Phase one of the new website is now complete with the transfer of content from the old Web site to the new.

There were a few teething problems with Logins but I trust all can now login and have updated their personal details.

So far approximately 1/3 of the budget has been spent to develop the website as you see it now. Phase two will be to refresh, add new content and to better integrate some of the backend functions. In time we are working towards having members add content directly into the For Sale section and more information in the Lavender trail.

The Video section is intended to be about general information and of interest to the public. We may also consider using this to promote a members farm for a short period. If you have good quality videos you would like to submit please do contact me. We would also still like to receive your pictures. I expect the website will change over time as we find what is been used or useful to members. I will always welcome your feedback and suggestions via email.

Over this year you can expect to receive information emails about these web developments. The website will however always stay true to the NZLGA mission to research, develop and promote high quality New Zealand essential oil and associated products.

Shipping and packing information

With the ongoing issues on shipping Lavender oil I have written some packing recommendations which you can find on our website in the Library section under the member's information.

<http://www.lavender.org.nz/members-information-xidg62095.html>

Absorbent packing material can often be found at your local NZ Safety Shop. I would recommend its use in order to protect your product and your liability should your package be damaged.

Also in the Library section you will find the Material Safety data Sheets (MSDS) we have developed to accompany bulk oil shipments.

<http://www.lavender.org.nz/msds-datasheets-xidg62078.html>

This section also has a multi Modal Dangerous Goods form which should be used along with the MSD form.

The association is in good heart and it is very pleasing to see many new members. A special welcome to you. I hope you get a lot out of your Lavender enterprises and please seek help and advice from members nearby if needed. We are all here to help.

Our two main events later this year will be the oil awards and AGM/conference. These are important events in our calendar and I would encourage all members to get involved.

All the best

Peter Jemmett

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From the Editor

Hello here we are again at the end of summer, and from all accounts this season has been a bit unusual.

Our plants started flowering a bit later than last year, and were more erratic in their coming to maturity. We harvested later than last year, and probably could have harvested up to a fortnight later.

The Livesey's distilled our oil this year, and after reading Robert's comments on Page 11, we might have got a greater yield by leaving it another week! The other unusual occurrence was a pretty decent re-growth.

It is an El Nino year, and this could have had some effect. The South Island seems to have had some erratic weather by all accounts

In the Auckland region, this summers cycles of long periods of hot sunny weather with regular heavy, often overnight rain, has been a great start for a new field of Pacific Blue, the downside of course, is the equally phenomenal weed growth.

As we've started our plants in pots in our suburban back yard, we've experimented with different ways of providing the best environment for the young plants. One common factor is LIME! Generous application both in the potting mix and on the field has produced markedly better quality plants. Will be interesting to see if it has the same effect on the oil!



Now that the weather has started to cool we can turn our attention to the new NZLGA website. Details on the next page if you haven't had a look yet.

In all a satisfying summer but plenty of work ahead for the cooler months.

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

John Bougen and Carol McFadgen at Reefton

Nicola Maclean and Peter O'Carroll from Christchurch

Rob Martin from Timaru

Belinda Gummer and Ray Dixon at Dargaville

David and Nadine Bott at Wellington

..AND SOME CHANGES

Margaret and Warwick Chandler have sold their lavender enterprise 'Lesnie Lavender' and have moved to Nelson. They are staying on as Associate Members

To advertise in

The Lavender Link

Rates for

NZLGA Members:

Full page - \$44.00

Half page - \$27.00

1/4 page - \$17.50

1/8 page - \$ 13.00

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Non-Members:

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Helen Mason

helen_am@61@hotmail.com

As the content of The Lavender Link is subscribed, comments made and advice given may not necessarily represent or reflect the policy or opinion of the

New Zealand Lavender Growers Association.

New NZLGA Website

How to Navigate Our New Website.

Most of you will have logged in by now, I hope! And taken a quick tour around our new website, it is still a work in progress and we do have some glitches to sort out. However most of it is up and running.

If you are a member you can **login** using your first email address you put on your membership form and the password **nzlgga2016**, from there you can **click on the person icon, top right** to get to your profile where a few things can be modified and you can change your password to something more memorable for you.

When you log in as a member you can find all the downloads and resources you might require, from the **Library & Resources Tab**. This includes the Rules, Membership List, New Growers Guide, Shipping and Packing Info, MSDS Sheets and Freight Documents, all in PDF downloadable form.

You cannot access this part of the website or the full library unless you are logged in.

From the **Home Page** the general public can access joining information, FAQ section and download a PDF for applying to be a member.

We have a **Products for Sale Page** currently with the Lavender Cards for sale on it, however...

we require info from members, for this to be better utilised please?

Plants for Sale , Oil for Sale, Rubbings for Sale, Properties for Sale, Distillation Services, Other Services such as product making etc, these will be displayed with your email contact as a link so the customer can contact you directly. – Send to Charlotte and she will forward on to our website designer.

Eventually we hope to have links to member's websites and maybe showcase some products or a member each month, but that is still in the formation stage.

We require a lot of photos, for all parts of the website please send these to Charlotte our Website Co-ordinator and she will put them into the correct format and send them on to our website designer for inclusion.

I am already receiving many inquiries through our **Contact Page**, from new prospective members and people looking for work on lavender farms and also for products so this is already proving to be a wonderful asset to our association.

There is also a **Connect with Us Tab** and that takes you to our **Association Face book Page**, please interact with this as well, Charlotte is moderator for this, all posts need to be factual, kind, and no profanity of any kind will be accepted.

Your committee has lots of ideas to add to the functionality of our New Website and it is always a work in progress, your ideas are welcome.

www.lavender.org.nz go take a look, if you cant log in please let me know by email cdbrown@clear.net.nz

P.S. the website looks a bit different on a mobile phone or ipad, you may have to click on the three horizontal lines to get the index menu to drop down and navigate from there.



Great Barrier Lavender

You might be wondering why a Lavender farm on Great Barrier Island, far from the general markets and with added transport costs. Well the northern Lavender group have asked that too so have decided they need to pay us a visit to see what it is all about. True to the northern group we can expect a lot of advice and encouragement of our little enterprise in addition to the usual lunch and camaraderie.

We can truly claim to be an off the grid, environmental friendly lavender farm. All our power comes from our Solar Panels and a sophisticated system of electronics to convert it into regular 230 Volts we are all familiar with. Our water supply comes from our small river and is collected with the cooperation of our neighbour, approximately 1 km up stream, deep in native forest.

Our big event of the year for us and the island is the annual garden tour. Actually there are 4 separate garden tours making up this garden extravaganza. We are one of the many sponsors and for this we get to sell our products at two properties on the tour timed for morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. Despite some rain our sales were brisk and compressed into the time each tour had at these properties.

On the Sunday we have the Rose day where you get to show off your best roses and hopefully win in one of the many categories. This year Margaret won in the best colour category with her red edged pink rose. We also have a stall for our lavender products.

Last year we were very late in harvesting our Supers due to other commitments off island so were well past their best for dried flowers by the time we started. For this season we got our act together and harvested just before Christmas. We had Cindy's help with the harvest so with all hands on deck we were done in two days of hot work. Luckily we have our own river to cool off in so long as you don't mind the eels.

The Lavender is now all dried ready for packing and product making. A good winters job and another link story.

Cheers Peter & Margaret



Frost impact in the South Island

Lavender growing in Wairau Valley Marlborough was certainly different this year. Two late frosts mid November of 5 and 4.5 degrees wiped out the fresh young growth on all our lavender except a few that were sheltered in the driveway.

Very high temperatures from then on resulted in erratic, leggy, untidy growth on some of the plants, even with two lots of water made no difference. After 24 years of growing, a bit of a shock!

I don't think the poor plants knew what to do! We are fortunate to have inherited some harvest from friends.

The white butterfly's are in large quantity this year and present a wonderful sight dancing over the patch, they must be eating something to their liking!

I have a box of purple corrugated cardboard– no longer needed if any one is interested.

Also tea bag fabric.

Elsie-

leighvander@farmside.co.nz

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From the Northern Region

For some time now we have been threatening to have a meeting at the Jemmetts on Great Barrier Island. At the last meeting we decided the time was March 2016. There was initial enthusiasm not dampened by distance. But inevitably as time drew closer and unfinished work made demands on remaining time and costings were done. The numbers started to dwindle. It was decided to have the meeting on the mainland and for those still interested a pre-meeting on the Barrier.

Three couples turned up at the Jemmetts for a bar-b-que meeting which went on into the evening and started again in the morning. Undoubtedly a record for the longest lavender meeting ever.

Peter and Margaret have a unique set of problems facing them in their location. There are the obvious ones of living in a lovely spot with beaches that invite you for a swim in warm water and bush walks that lead to hot pools or beautiful scenery or just the fact that the pace of life is slower and less hectic or stressful there.

There are rabbits and more rabbits and more rabbits. There is a limited amount of flat terrain and if you decide to clear some manuka on the hill to plant more lavender, there is a limit to the amount you can cut each year. A total fire ban which means you cannot burn rubbish, a house to finish as well as establishing a reliable power source, all this while not being a permanent resident.

Thanks to Peter and Margaret for your kind hospitality, we will be back
Mike

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NZLGA Library news

The Essence of Provence: Pierre Magnum. (NZLGA B071)

First published in France 2001 as *L'Occitane: Une Histoire Vraie*

Translated from the French by Richard Saver. Reprinted 2012

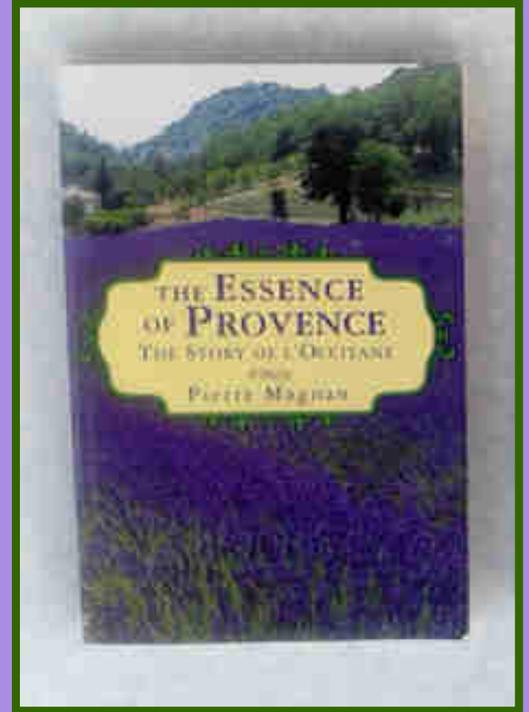
A romanticised, sentimental, but basically true story, of the origins and spectacular growth of L'Occitane, today ranked as one of the world's most successful companies.

At the age of 22 Olivier Baussan "...happened upon a rusty, broken-down still in a field of lavender, which he bought for a song. Somehow he knew that he was destined to gather and distil lavender, honeysuckle, sage and thyme, essences that he would sell to the region. In 1976 he founded

L'Occitane (meaning 'a woman of Provence')he began manufacturing shampoos, colognes, bath essences and, later, soaps."

"Founded on the premise of pure products, principled ethics and unorthodox business methods L'Occitane prospered becoming, by the 1980's, a major business with hundreds of stores and thousands of staff world-wide"

I, personally, found the style of writing somewhat irritating but was inspired by this rags to riches story.



Grow Your Handmade Business by Kari Chapin (NZLGA B072)

How to Envision, Develop and Sustain a Successful Creative Business 2012

Kari Chapin is also the author of *'The Handmade Marketplace'*

Of the marketing and business building books we hold in the library I find these two, by Kari Chapin, the easiest to relate to. Her books motivate me to take a fresh look at our business (Leafy Hollow), set new goals and act upon them! Here is someone who has 'walked the talk', sees this whole business thing as a continual learning process and encourages you to learn from the experience of others.

Kari's first book focussed on marketing your products effectively. This second book goes into more depth on the skills needed to start or grow an existing business.

Part One 'Mapping your Dream' covers where you are now and where you are heading, formulating a mission statement, goals, intentions and how to get help

"If you don't have goals you don't have anything to work towards"

Part Two: 'Planning for Success' covers types of business models, business plans, marketing plans, production plans, budgets, profit and loss etc

All good stuff!

When reading this book I recommend you have a big sheet of paper by you to jot down ideas as they pop into your head.

Not a new book but another one that I have found so helpful and referred to frequently is:

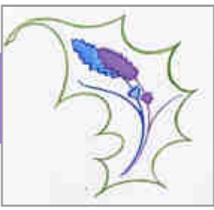
"The 7 Key Principles of Successful Small Business Marketing" by Roger Brooksbank. 1999

(NZLGA B028)

These books and many more available from the NZLGA Library.

Pauline Livesey





Summer at Leafy Hollow

This summer has been most notable for the constant heat and humidity that seems to have had an effect on all areas of our business.

Hot Auckland days have been punctuated by steamy showers of rain and rumbling thunder. Fruit has rotted on the trees before ripening and the weeds have continued to grow apace. Because of the heat gardening has been confined to early morning and late evening. During garden tours visitors have shuffled from tree to tree in an attempt to keep out of the sun, breathing sighs of relief as they entered Robert's Red Shed for the distillation talk.

On the positive side, we have had many visitors, plants in the nursery are thriving and we sold out of our Natural Insect Repellent (no surprises there!). A wonderful end to the summer season was a trip to Great Barrier Island for a "Regional Meeting" at the Jemmett's place. As you can see this was a very relaxed affair with conversation ranging from lifestyle options to talcum powder and everything in between!

This season Robert has done more distillation than is usual for us, mainly due to an increase in new growers and another distiller closing down. The local weather conditions appear to have had an effect on both the harvest and distillation process.

Pauline Livesey



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Thoughts & observations on Lavender Distillation 2016

After 10+ years distilling for ourselves and others, reading widely and listening to those with more experience I can confidently say that, while still learning, I now know a little more than when we started out.

This season, in particular, I have noticed a little more about aspects that are easily overlooked, forgotten or not even considered by growers. I am not an expert but do like to give things 'a good coat of looking at'. Some growers (not members) brought:

Flowers that were not mature

Stems so long that they took up more capacity than the flowers

Plant material that was damp or sweating

The above resulting in lower oil yields and variable oil quality. On the other hand, growers who delayed cutting until they had several consecutive dry days AND waited until the flowers were very mature went away with more oil of a much higher quality.

Another of my 'looking at' observations showed that the distillate was getting hotter and rising in the separator more quickly than usual. Initial thought was that there was a problem with either the boiler or condenser. After listening to other distillers who had experienced similar and observing variations in distillation done at different times of the day it suggests that there was something else at work:

Maybe our steam was too hot or coming through too quickly. Adjustments did not seem to indicate this.

Maybe the plant material was too wet or too dry. Unlikely as this hasn't happened before.

Maybe the hot summer, prevalent humidity and atmospheric pressure were affecting the process.

On referring to Tim Denny's book "*Field Distillation of Herbaceous Plants*" it becomes evident that no one factor could be responsible for the variety of outcomes. In short, as lavender growers we would all benefit from a greater knowledge of how lavender is grown, harvested and how distillation apparatus works under different conditions- **CRUCIAL TO THE OUTCOME OF THE PROCESS.**

Robert Livesey





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