



## Lavender Snippets October 2022

It seems like my excitement that spring had arrived in last month's newsletter was a little premature and I may have jinxed spring. Nature loves to surprise, and we certainly had a taste of snow, wind and rain throughout the country over the last couple of weeks. The winter wonderland in some parts of the country made for beautiful photos, and has been great for tourists, but has upset many of our plans to plant lavender and generally get ready for the most important time of the year for us – summer!

**A huge welcome to new members of the NZLGA – Tanja Benthien and Terry Vivier.**

Last month I mentioned that I would be profiling our Elected Officers and Executive over the next few months.

**Chairperson, Stuart Abernethy** has been a lavender grower since 2009, living in Carterton on a lifestyle block and co-owner of Lavender Abbey.

He has been a member of the NZLGA Executive since 2020 and is also the Oil Awards Convener.

Stuart works fulltime in Wellington as a Service Delivery Manager for The Laptop Company.

For Lavender Abbey, he is the muscle Jan requires to run the lavender farm and to assist with weekend markets!



### **Jan Abernethy owner of Lavender Abbey – NZLGA Treasurer**

I come from an accounting background, so starting Lavender Abbey in 2010, was a welcome creative outlet for me. As most lavender growers now, once you start with lavender, it is all encompassing, and the passion takes over. So pretty much, lavender is my life now. Stu is my husband, lavender is my passion, purple is my favourite colour, photography is my favourite pastime, dogs are my favourite animals, spring is my favourite season and being in nature is where I like to be.



### **Mark Froude – Committee Member – Black Teal Bay**

After acquiring our property more than a decade ago we finally moved to NZ from a very urban Singapore in 2018 where I had been working for many years. We were looking to do something completely different we thought we could try planting lavender on our property and see how we go. My wife Jasmine also has a keen interest in gardening and crafting so lavender worked well for us. We have continued to plant more plants every year and we are now distilling and producing our essential oil for use in our handcrafted aromatherapy products.

Our property has its challenges, it's not flat for a start and when we first took it on it was a weed filled wilding pine forest which we have progressively converted to natives and areas for lavender and other botanicals. Growing lavender is an activity which we embarked on with no prior experience and we continue to learn every day.

### **Tracy Voice - Committee Member - Ranui Essentials, Martinborough**

I've been involved in growing lavender since 2013, starting small on our 10-acre block in Martinborough with just over 1500 plants.

Since that time Eric and I have expanded our plants to 3000, have installed a distillery which holds 100kg flower and have a farm shop onsite which is open most weekends. In the season we host many events ranging from flower picking to stargazing to private tours. For me this is a hobby as I worked in Wellington full time as a Snr Executive in Government. My governance and strategic skills come in handy for NZLGA as over the years I've led the Martinborough Lavender Conference, worked through the Food Safety Template for Lavender Growers, assist with lavender judging and held the secretary role for a number of years. I hope over the next year we can create a quality mark for NZ Lavender, so it is recognised within both within NZ and across the Globe.



## ***Here's what's happening on some Lavender Farms around the country:***

### **Mountain Road Estate**

Kylie and Dan Zinsli at Mountain Road Estate are opening their garden for the Taranaki Sustainable Backyards Trail this year!

A Beautiful and productive 3 acres offering organic lavender products, truffle, dried herbs, and wellness goodies.

Please come and join in on our events or just come for a tour...

Check out our FB page Mountain Road Estate or Taranaki Sustainable Backyards Trail for more info.  
October 28, 29, 30 November 4, 5, 6



## Wanaka Lavender Farm

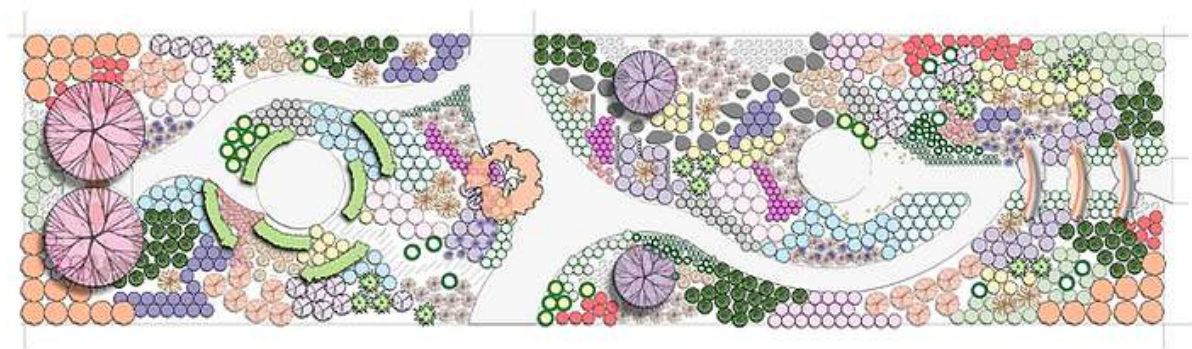
Exciting things are happening at Wānaka Lavender Farm! Over the winter we have kickstarted a few projects, some big and some small but all essential for the progress of our beloved farm.

### Work in Progress: New Additions to The Farm



### Project #1 - Whimsical Garden

The part of the farm that we're concentrating on right now has been transformed on multiple occasions, most recently from a rose garden to a sunflower patch. But the team has decided that it's time for it to become a more permanent, breath-taking and interactive feature.





Our idea is to make something whimsical that will look beautiful in bloom and be a fun area for our guests to enjoy all year round. Local parents with children will have an extensive new area to discover, and out-of-town visitors will have more ground to wander through and marvel at.

It will take some hard work, a lot of love and a good amount of time to bring our vision to life. We teamed up with Lori from Lorian Anna Landscape Design, previously a grounds keeper at the farm, for a brainstorming session and Lori then came up with a landscaping plan for the area. Our aim is to have the whimsical garden completed this spring, so that it is ready for the public to enjoy in summer 2022/23.

### **Project #2 - Steel Men**

In the spirit of creating new features, Tim is also excited about something he is developing with Gordon from Twizel.

Our brilliant distilling area has been on display at the farm for over a year now. And guests who visit can have a look at where the magic of lavender oil extraction happens. However, we wanted to add a personal touch to this area to explain the process of harvesting and distilling a little better.

Keep your eyes open for the addition of a trio of steel men at work in this area to help tell our story.



### **Project #3 - Handmade Wooden Signs**

Another project we are just finishing up is creating direction signs for around the farm.

Our lavender farm has grown substantially since we first opened and it's time we had some additional signage to help people know which way is what! Stef and Tim are at the forefront of this project and are making good progress.

Hopefully this little touch will make the guest experience better for all.



#### **Project #4 - Get Jove to Wānaka**

For a while, we were figuring out where we could find a friendly highland cow to join Kristen, our other resident highland cow. This breed is hard to come by on this side of the world, and a lot of thought had to go into locating and transporting this gentle giant.

We are so excited to announce that Jove the highland cow has now joined the team at the Wānaka Lavender Farm. Kristen is extremely happy to have a friend again, and Jove is settling in well.

Don't hesitate to come over and say hi to our new curious buddy... you might even find him in a playful mood!



At Wānaka Lavender Farm, we are constantly coming up with new ideas, innovation and developments that are both visible and invisible. The goal, always, is to have the guest's best interest at heart, and to make our piece of land a fun, beautiful, safe, progressive place to visit.

## BUNNY LANE PATEAROA – Gaylene and Barry Flamank

It is always a defining moment when you decide to take the leap of faith (or a leap of insanity) and elect to pursue the dream, to make the “What if we...” a reality. We did it and so many people have, once hearing our story, commented that they wish they could do something similar. Why don't they and why did we?

For us in the end it was a simple step. We already had a holiday home and sections, in a place that we loved. So, in 2019, when the opportunity arose to move with a casual job offer in the Maniototo we jumped at the chance. Sold up in Dunedin and moved to Patearoa. Somehow, we would use our skills to make the extra money we would need and “live off the land” as much as possible.



Easter 2017 we planted, as a trial, some *grosso* lavender on our empty quarter acre section. The idea was that this crop would supply both oil and dried flowers.



In 2020 we added to this section another plot of lavender – this time Pacific Blue which provides a sweeter fragrance and the opportunity to provide a culinary product for those wanting to enhance food with lavender.

We have discovered that the free-draining gravelly soil here in Patearoa, is one that the lavender thrives in. The climate is somewhat challenging in the winter months with snow falls and up to -15-degree frosts, and the summers can be hot, but we haven't lost any plants...yet! The recent snow didn't last long.

Our first harvest of the *grosso* was hung in bunches in our barn to dry. Covered an area of 6 x 7m and looked impressive. (I've plenty of dried material now!) The downside was the dried petals falling!



In the subsequent seasons we have distilled the flowers and our production yield has increased, with our first harvest of Pacific Blue earlier this year giving us another oil product.

With plenty of dried product I have crafted handmade products to sell, in addition to the oil and hydrosol. We now make soap and in a play of “Bunny” in the name I knit bunny's, some of which include lavender.





Being such a small boutique, dare I say, part-time business, how to market and sell has been a journey in itself. Pre Covid, I had tapped into the Cruise Ship markets, making the journey down to Dunedin for this, however since Covid this opportunity ceased. Local markets, word of mouth and having a semi-shop on site have been the source of sales since. The jump into social media will be the next scary but essential step.

## General information

**Website** [www.lavender.org.nz](http://www.lavender.org.nz) (Please report any issues to [webmaster@lavender.org.nz](mailto:webmaster@lavender.org.nz))

If you are not on the Lavender Trail but wish to be please email the Webmaster to be activated. Remember if you are not on, you can't be seen.

### Website tips.

1. You can edit your own profile by logging into the member's section. Scroll to the bottom "Profile Description." Don't forget to save your changes. You also have a photo gallery but for security reasons photos must be emailed to the webmaster for inclusion.
2. Did you know you can now pay your subscription by credit card? (PayPal) Login to the Members Area and select "My Membership" from the left-hand menu. There is a 5% surcharge for all credit card transactions.

## Lavender in New Zealand (our group Facebook page, 64 members)



This group is for members of the NZ Lavender Growers Association and affiliates, to share lavender information, pictures, recipes, what you are up to in your lavender patch, items for sale or any other lavender related topics. Only members can see who's in the group and what they post. Talga members are welcome to join. Click on the following link to join.  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/387329029014654>



## News from Affiliates

### News from Talga (our Australian Lavender cousins)

Talga's Lavender Enews for September is now out and can be downloaded from <https://www.lavender.org.nz/> in the Library/Members Resources --> Talga News.



### EXPERT CONFERENCE 2023 SPEAKER PROGRAMME FOCUSED ON BUSINESS SUCCESS

*With open arms we would like to invite all our NZLGA friends to attend this Conference! It's been a long time between drinks, so come along and we guarantee you a good time and the beginnings of firm friendships!*

We have finalised our Speaker Programme for the full day Conference on Thursday 18 May 2023 and it is looking very exciting with knowledgeable and relevant speakers on the **Five Key Elements of Business Success!**

#### **VISION – Dee Anne Prather, Managing Director Downunder Enterprises**

Our Keynote Speaker Dee Anne Prather, Managing Director, Downunder Enterprises, will speak about her experience of creating clear goals that gave focus and direction to the development of her family farm to achieve major export success. Gain insight into what you consider your own business success and answer questions like “What do I want people to say about my business?” and “What does success look like for me?”.

#### **SINGULARITY – Clare Dean, Managing Director Tasmania Lavender Company and Port Arthur Lavender**

What will make your lavender business stand out in the marketplace? We are thrilled to announce our very experienced speaker on this topic is Clare Dean, Managing Director of the Tasmania Lavender Company and Port Arthur Lavender! Her familiarity with all aspects of growing lavender, developing and value-adding products, retailing, hospitality and managing customer expectations will be especially valuable to our delegates and she is in a unique position to share some secrets to creating your distinctive lavender brand.

#### **VALUE – Phillip Prather, President Australian Tea Tree Industry Association (ATTIA)**

We are privileged to welcome Phillip Prather, President of the ATTIA (and husband of Dee Anne!) who will give an overview of the accreditation process of tea tree essential oil and the value this has brought to

Australian producers. This will stimulate and inform the lavender industry discussion on the value drivers of our domestic market for essential oil and the pros and cons of introducing such a system to our collective production of lavender EO.

#### **VISIBILITY – Nikki Barker, Monroe Marketing + Design**

How do we reach our customers and get our brand noticed when there is so many visual messages bombarding us every day? Nikki Barker is a digital marketing professional working with lavender growers and producers to help improve their online presence and increase brand awareness and she will give us strategies and tools to boost the visibility of our brands. Delegates will leave this session equipped with a worksheet to conduct an audit of their marketing tools and solid information to assist their future digital marketing plan.

#### **PERSONALITY – Shane and Tessa McLaughlin, operators of Hillbilly Cider Company, Bilpin NSW**

We are delighted to have Shane and Tessa McLaughlin as our Gala Dinner Guest Speakers as they are a dynamic couple who have built a fun and vibrant brand for their Blue Mountains grown cider apple business. They will encourage us to let our personal style and individuality shine through our products and business approach and demonstrate that success can come with a genuine and engaging attitude.

#### **WORKSHOP PROGRAMME DETAILS TO BE RELEASED NEXT MONTH**

These five major topics form the foundation of our Conference day at The Carrington Hotel on Thursday 18 May 2023. We also have a TALGA member Panel Discussion about Agritourism planned and some compelling workshops for the Friday Field Day at Blue Mountains Lavender Farm on 19 May 2023 and will release more details shortly.

We hope this terrific line up of guest speakers entice you to begin planning your Conference participation, everyone is welcome, from interested yet-to-be growers to long term experienced lavender professionals, we can all refresh and learn new lessons in a stimulating face-to-face event.

#### **OFFICIAL CONFERENCE LAUNCH SCHEDULED FOR 1 NOVEMBER WITH DETAILS OF DELEGATE FEES AND ONLINE BOOKING SYSTEM TO BE RELEASED IN AN INDIVIDUAL EMAIL INVITATION TO ALL TALGA MEMBERS BEFORE WE OPEN BOOKINGS TO THE PUBLIC.**

As always, if you have any questions about the Conference, please contact Louise Bickerton via email [talgaevent00@gmail.com](mailto:talgaevent00@gmail.com) or mobile 0409717899.

If you would like to contribute to next month's newsletter, please email your articles and photos by 6<sup>th</sup> November to Trish – [info@lavenderhill.co.nz](mailto:info@lavenderhill.co.nz). We are always interested in hearing from you and what you are up to on your farm and would love to hear from new members about how they decided to start growing Lavender.

#### **Next publication mid- November**

Nga mihi nui (Kind Regards)  
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