

LAVENDER

SNIPPETS

November 2025

A short Chairman's Chatter for the Snippets.

CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

I hope you are all starting to see some flowers popping up from your lavender patches as I have seen from my recent travels around the South Island.

From our last month's Executive Meeting it was decided to develop a trademark option, as this seems to be a better fit for most of our lavender farmers, instead of the quality mark previously mentioned. Work will be ongoing throughout the year to our next AGM where we hope to present it. We welcome any suggestions from our members. More updates as we progress with this.

The Executive will go into our usual recess over the next few months as we will all be busy with our lavender harvest. I trust all goes well as it is looking to be a good season.

Cheers

Peter Jemmett

Interim Chairperson



NZLGA LIBRARY

The NZLGA library holds a wide variety of texts on numerous lavender topics available to lend.

Check out the Members Area on the NZLGA website.

Aromatherapy/ Essential Oils	Culinary	Fiction	General
Growing Herbs	Growing Lavender	Hydrosols	Marketing/ Business Development
Medicinal	Oil Production	Products - creams etc	Products - perfumery
Products - general	Products - soap making	Safety/chemistry/ bioactivity	Story, history, folklore
	Varieties	Weeds and weed control	



Lavender Lottie

I've always had an affinity with plants, my first foray into growing was around the age of 7 with my first herb garden. I grew up on an orchard with plenty of opportunity to learn about horticulture, surrounded as I was by wider family who were enthusiastic gardeners and self-taught horticulturalists – especially my grandparents who had planted the 25 acre orchard.

As a child I knew that I wanted to have a lavender farm! Lavender now consumes my life- has done for nearly 60 years, probably since that first herb garden. I learn more about lavender all the time even now.

A few years back I decided to formalise this naturally taught knowledge with a Level 4 Certificate in Horticulture, achieved part-time over several years. This allowed me to gain employment and experience in several large commercial nurseries, which has given me insight into current industrial practices and new research.

Back in 1995, together with 14 other enthusiasts, we started the NZLOPA, New Zealand Lavender Oil Producers Association, now known as NZLGA.

This year we celebrated 30yrs and I have had the good fortune to have shared fellowship and knowledge with you all along the way and hope to meet you in person along your lavender journey, maybe at the Conference next year.

Kind Regards

Charlotte Brown

2025-26 EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

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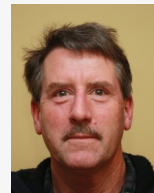
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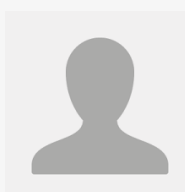
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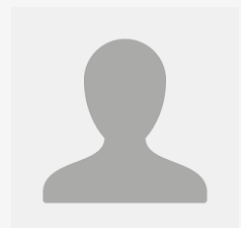


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Committee/Newsletter
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A letter from Lottie

Funny how life has a way of happy co-incidences. This was a recent one that occurred when I sat next to a couple I didn't know at the Amberley Garden Club meeting the other night.

After talking for a while, he said "Oh, I had a brother who grew lavender and had it distilled somewhere here in Amberley", and upon further investigation I realised I was talking to our very own Dennis Matthew's younger brother Warren and his wife Sally. Anyway, to cut a long story slightly shorter he has written this for you, which hopefully will lend a slightly better insight into what I meant by our Dennis's wicked sense of humour that I alluded to rather clumsily at the Oil Awards when I introduced the Dennis Matthews Memorial Cup and why we have it to be presented each year.

The early life of Dennis Lee Matthews, through the eyes of his younger brother, Warren

We lived in a 2 bedroom house on a half acre elevated section in Wainoni Road, Christchurch. Our father was an engineer and mother a seamstress among many other things. We were blessed with wonderful parents and had a happy home.

Dennis was born 3 September 1946 and I followed 2½ years later in 1949. We shared a bedroom obviously, being just the two bedrooms due to restraints post war, but I don't ever remember any fights between us. Because of the difference in ages, for the most part we had different friends and so were not overly close as some brothers are. In many ways we were a bit like chalk and cheese as they say.

We had lots of different fruit trees and chooks which we had to feed. Because the ground was very sandy (we basically lived on a sand hill) we were always digging underground huts, we were lucky none of them collapsed. Dennis had a couple of funny accidents I remember. Once in the garden he managed to sit on a hidden hedgehog, but not for long. Another one was during winter in the bathroom. We had a kerosene Valour heater as they were called, he bent over and his bare bum came in contact with the hot grill which left him with 5 stripes across his backside, Ouch.

Dennis didn't stick at things for long, he tried tap dancing, piano accordion, to name a few. Perhaps it was just a case of "nope, that's not for me", so let's move on...

He did have a bent towards technical or electrical stuff. On one occasion after a trip to mum's sister on the other side of town, he had apprehended a jug cord. Later when the auntie called to query its whereabouts, it was found in Dennis's bag totally in pieces. I'm guessing it was put back together and returned. We can laugh about it now.

He used to make transistor radios using a coil and a few other electronic bits; sling an aerial out the bedroom window and along the fence, add some headphones and pick up the local stations. We spent a lot of time playing around and listening to the radios. Later he advanced on to making amplifiers which was very handy when I joined a music band and was useful for both guitar and vocals. He also put together some speaker boxes to connect to the amp. Made some wooden enclosures covered in Vinyl with metal edges, quite professional looking. We thought so anyway.

Another memory that comes to mind is our tree house. We had a tree stump in the backyard on which Dennis had built a hut complete with fireplace, chimney and roof. Yes, we used the fireplace and yes, I think you can guess what happened. One day we were called in for lunch only to be disturbed by a noise outside. The hut was on fire and with it all our books and some toys up in flames. Got it under control with the garden hose, but that was the end of the hut.

At a time much earlier than this, our grandmother (on dad's side) had a house in Redcliffs, not far from where Dennis would buy a house years later. Anyway, I was grandma's favourite (apparently) and would be given things like chocolate or a small amount of money, but not the others.

A letter from Lottie (cont'd)



On one occasion Dennis and Cousin Janice from Ashburton took exception to this and took me up into the hills behind Redcliffs and left me there by a cave. I would have been quite young, perhaps 5 or 6. Sometime later my dad had to come and rescue me. I can only vaguely recall this event so no lasting damage done.

Another time the same two darlings took further retribution by cutting all grandma's hydrangeas at the back of her house to the ground. Can't remember what consequences came of that one.

We also went on annual Christmas camping holidays early on with family members and later with family friends. Great adventures with a different place every year. Camping was quite an adventure back then.

On the academic scene, Dennis went to Linwood North Primary, Linwood Intermediate and Shirley Boys High School where he was awarded the Athletic Blues. He was a keen runner and joined a Harrier's club like his father. After leaving school Dennis enrolled at Lincoln University where he received his Bachelor of Agriculture. During holidays he took work on farms as part of the practical part of his degree. He was planning on going higher, but love got in the way and he followed Sandie to Australia, whom he married on their return to NZ in 1968. They had a son, Kim in 1968 and a daughter, Jo-Anne in 1973.

One of his first jobs was at Lion Breweries where he worked as a chemist but it was not a job he liked and so it was off to Australia again. On his return to NZ, he took a job at the Christchurch City Council Drainage Board working at the Bromley Treatment Station, where he spent 28 years as a scientist working on many research projects including the effects of sludge on the land and its effect on cattle they had there. Later he was involved with the council's worm composting project. As I was a graphic artist, I was involved with him in designing the brochures and info for the project.

By this time Dennis was developing a keen interest in plants. They bought a house in Royalist Ave, North Brighton where Dennis started his native plant venture Bushland Nurseries. Later they moved to a bigger property in James Street, Redcliffs where he expanded the business to include houseplants and built a large wooden greenhouse to grow his plants. I also designed the logo and brochures for his Bushland Nurseries business.

Dennis liked hiking and spent five days walking the Heaphy track with a 9 and 5 year old in tow. Later he would venture off to India, Nepal and China. Unfortunately, it was in India or Nepal that he picked up an intestinal bug which had some awful sounding name and which was pre-cancerous and the treatment had unpleasant side effects. Perhaps this helped lead to his untimely death at 59.

His first marriage ended in divorce which left him free later to marry Virginia McNaughton in June 1997 at the beautiful Gethsemane Gardens (which sadly is no longer there) on Clifton Hill above Sumner. Together they bought a 20-acre lifestyle property in Melton Park not far from West Melton and proceeded to create *Lavender Downs* from scratch.

I remember helping to deconstruct his Redcliffs greenhouse and cart it off to the new property. With Virginia's lavender expertise and Dennis's determination they created something quite extraordinary and special out of nothing.

Sadly, it came to a premature end when Dennis succumbed to cancer in April 2005 after he was given just four short weeks to get everything in order.

Lottie speaking ... Dennis and Virginia were very active in the NZLGA, with Dennis holding the Chair and writing books together which are in our library, producing plants for sale, and helping with research over the time that he had with us. He was and still is considered a valuable member of our Association even though he is no longer with us.

Published in consultation with Virginia McNaughton

Feature ...

Lavender, Homely Lavender

Taken from "Lavender, Sweet Lavender", by Judyth A McLeod

Oil of Lavender

This is not essential oil, but a rubbing oil which can be used at full strength.



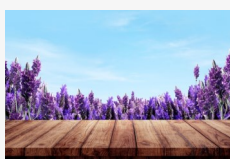
To make Oil of Lavender, take a clean glass bottle and add to it a good large handful of fresh lavender flowers and cover with one litre of olive oil. Cover and leave to macerate in the warmth of the sun for three to five days. Strain through a cloth, add fresh flowers to the bottle and return the lavender-infused oil. Repeat until the oil is highly perfumed and charged with the active principles of lavender.

Lavender Liquid Furniture Polish

This liquid furniture polish really 'feeds' old wood and is easy to use when cleaning and polishing carved wood. Apply generously to dry wood, sparingly to well maintained wood, and polish to a gentle clear shine with a clean soft cloth.

3 tsp oil of lavender 150 ml real turpentine
150 ml raw linseed oil 75 ml apple cider vinegar
75 ml methylated spirits
10 drops essential lavender oil

Place all ingredients together in a bottle and shake together thoroughly. Shake before using.



Moth Repellent Sachet Mixture

2 cups dried lavender flowers
1 cup dried lightly crushed camphor laurel leaves
1/2 cup dried lightly crushed costmary leaves
1 cup dried wormwood leaves
1/2 cup dried pennyroyal
1/2 cup dried peppermint
1 cup dried lavender leaves

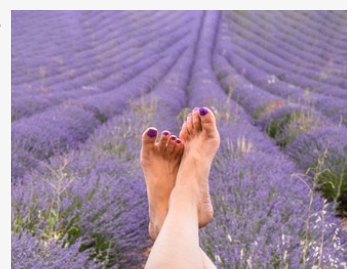


This fresh mint and lavender scent with astringent undertones really seems to keep the moths at bay. Hang a sachet on hangers and pop one in each drawer.

Lavender Foot Rub

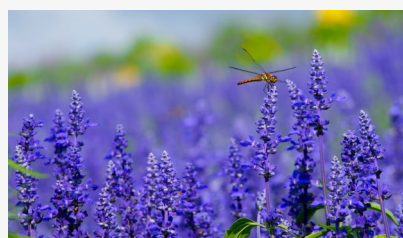
1/2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar (no other)
30 drops essential oil of lavender
3 Tbsp safflower/sunflower/avocado oil

Mix all the ingredients together in the glass jar and stand in a roasting pan of hot water. Stir and heat gently. Allow to cool. Place cap on bottle and shake well. Remove the cap until the mixture is cold, then replace the cap, Shake before use.



Lavender Insect Repellent

Lavender oil is a powerful insect repellent. Rub a few drops diluted in a little safflower oil on your skin before indulging in the great outdoors to repel flies, midges and mosquitoes. Or throw a handful of dried stalks and branches left over from the harvest onto the barbecue or picnic fire. With stored fruit, sprinkle dried leaves over it.



Lavender Cosmetic Vinegar

Freshly gathered heads of lavender with the dew dried from them White wine vinegar

Fill a glass jar with whole heads of lavender blossoms, and cover with white wine vinegar. Leave the jar with a plastic like on in a sunny place for two weeks, shaking the bottle each day. Empty the bottle, straining out the vinegar. Refill the bottle with fresh lavender flowers and cover with the same vinegar. Repeat after two weeks, making a triple infusion in all.

An old Scottish recipe used half rosemary and half lavender to make a very refreshing vinegar for adding to "Sweet Washing Water".



Lavender at Christmas-time

Christmas and lavender are linked through gifts of lavender-infused products, lavender-themed Christmas decor, and events that combine the two, such as holiday lights illuminating lavender fields.

Lavender's association with serenity and a cozy, nostalgic feeling makes it a natural fit for the Christmas season, with lavender-scented candles, sachets, and even lavender-themed ornaments providing a unique twist on traditional holiday celebrations.

Lavender in Christmas Gifts

Aromatherapy & Home Fragrance: Gift lavender-scented candles, pillow mists, or essential oil diffusers to create a calming atmosphere during the busy holiday season.

Many New Zealand lavender farms offer premium gift boxes and hampers filled with various lavender products, including jams, soaps, sachets, and candles, making them a thoughtful and relaxing Christmas gift.

Mini bundles of dried lavender flowers or sachets filled with lavender buds add a natural and fragrant touch to gift boxes.

Lavender in Christmas Decor

Lavender can be used as a colour theme for your Christmas tree and decorations, creating a sophisticated and soothing alternative to traditional colours. Incorporate lavender-purple Christmas tree balls and other ornaments to complement a lavender-themed Christmas.

Add sprigs of dried lavender to handmade Christmas wreaths for a unique, natural, and fragrant decoration.

Why Lavender Works for Christmas

Lavender symbolizes serenity, grace, and calmness, which can be a welcome antidote to the potential stress of the holiday season.

Its light, refreshing, and cosy scent provides a wonderful and familiar feeling often associated with Christmas.

Aromatherapy Benefits

The calming, relaxing, and stress-relieving properties of lavender are ideal for promoting well-being during a busy festive period.





If you would like to order library books, email **nzlga-library@lavender.org.nz**.

This link is in the library under Members Resources.

<https://www.lavender.org.nz/nzlga-library-resources/members-resources>

LAVENDER snippets

will continue to be sent out every month,

To advertise anything lavender related in the Lavender Snippets,
send your photos, articles or input to Delia ...

stonefieldsnz@gmail.com

Contributions from members about what is happening at your place are most welcome.
Please send contributions by the 10th of each month.



The **TALGA** (our Australian Lavender cousins) current newsletter
is now available and can be downloaded
from the NZLGA website.

Go to: Library/Members Resources—TALGA News

Facebook

Our Facebook page currently has 65 members.

This group is for members of the NZ Lavender Growers Association and affiliates, in order to share lavender information, pictures, recipes, the latest happenings in your lavender patch, items for sale, or any other lavender related topics.

Only members can see who is in the group and what they post. It is not for people interested in lavender that are not paid members, so please don't invite people to join who are not paid members.

TALGA members are welcome to join.



Lavender in New Zealand

NZLGA Website

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. Also, it's a good idea to write a short profile about your farm and business, along with some photos from your personal gallery. You can edit your profile description by logging into the Members Section of our website. Photos will still need to be emailed to the Webmaster for inclusion.

(Please report any issues to webmaster@lavender.org.nz)