

## The M-D U LOGO

will go in this corner. Pat S. has been working on designing a logo for our group. She will share what she has rendered at our next meeting, and we'll decide as a group, which design we would like to have.

NEWSLETTER OF THE MASON-DIXON UNIT OF  
THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA

# WILD THYMES

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 2009

## WELCOME HERBIES

**Welcome** to the inaugural issue of **WILD THYMES**, the newsletter of the revitalized Mason-Dixon Unit (M-D U) of The Herb Society of America (HSA). This communiqué is a vehicle for all unit members to share recipes, poems, book reviews, happenings, and other herb-based information.

As you read about the Unit's endeavors, you will note that the M-D U, in keeping with the mission of the HSA, is an outreach group, working to educate the general public, as well as its members, about herbs. In addition to providing information at public venues, members take field trips, learn about herbs as part of each month's meeting, engage in discussions based on an in-common herb-related book, and indulge in the pleasures of herb-based foods.

Within this issue are rundowns for the Fall 2008 meetings and minutes for the January 2009 meeting. Also, you will find the observations of our newest member regarding attending her first and subsequent monthly meetings. In addition to the financial report, there are recipes, which use herbs, summaries of three of Susan Wittig Albert's books, and a calendar of forth coming herbal events.

Wishing you much pleasure as you read **WILD THYMES** and much joy as you engage in your herbal ventures.

Diane L.M. Wittig, Editor



Bay Laurel

*Laurus Nobilis*

Herb of the Year

### DID YOU KNOW . . .

that as an HSA member you are entitled to download one copy of the HSA 43 page *Bay: An Herb Society of America Guide* on your personal computer, for free, from the HSA web-site?

User name: hsa

Password: society

### BIRTHDAYS:

- February 7, Candy
- March 18, Diane

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## THE OBSERVATIONS OF AN HERBIE NEWBIE

By Annette Steger

As we enter 2009, the Mason-Dixon Unit (M-D-U) of the National HSA is a blend of nine members from both the Maryland and Pennsylvania sides of the Mason Dixon Line. Each member is enthusiastic and interested in herbs.

This writer attended her first M-D U meeting in October 2008, when the theme was witchy herbs. The meeting was inviting enough for me to join the Unit and return to the next meeting when the focus was Thanksgiving food with herbs, including a delightful homemade sage wine.

The regularly scheduled December meeting was replaced with two seasonal events. We toured the decorated Ladew Manor House and treated ourselves to a Saturday afternoon tea at Anna's Tea Room. Being a member of the M-D U is a good way to both learn about herbs and make herbie friends.

## SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER REVISITED

At the September meeting we were pleased to welcome new members, Cathy Dircks, Jane Harrison, Shirley Smith, and Phyllis Struck to the Mason-Dixon Unit (M-D U) of The Herb Society of America. And then in October, we were pleased to welcome Annette Steger, who also became an active member.

After personal introductions and an introduction about the M-D U, we had a presentation about spicy herbs,

including horseradish, mustard, and peppers. Pat S. demonstrated making homemade mustard and explained about the properties of the ingredients. Candy explained about capsicum and demonstrated making "hand cream" with the peppers that helps with arthritis. We all were able to feel the heat as we tried on some of the hand cream. We then snacked on herby goodies.

The theme of the October meeting was witchy herbs.

Among other activities, Pat S. led a discussion based on a handout that she gave everyone. Content of this reference packet included a poem, some witchy lore, and the common and witchy names for some herbs, roots, and flowers used in witchcraft. We ended the meeting by indulging in witchy treats.

Also in October, on International Herb Day, Phyllis Shirley, and Pat Sweetman offered herbal information to the public at

the Mason Dixon Library in Stewartstown. They were prepared for a deluge, but unfortunately, it was a very slow Saturday for the library, and educational information was given out to only about a dozen people.

I know a bank whereon  
the wild thyme blows . . .  
William Shakespeare

## NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER REVISITED

At the November meeting we examined, more deeply, the various components of a fall symposium. In addition, we addressed the first Thanksgiving, where the participants most likely ate eel, cod, cranes, cranberry, partridge, eagles, venison, and seal. We also shared information about Thanksgiving

turkey herbs. One appealing recipe called for mixing oil with sage, bay, rosemary, and thyme. This poultice is then placed between the skin of the bird and the flesh to impart flavor while the turkey is cooking. Additionally, a dry rub, of the same herbs, could be rubbed on the bird's skin before baking.

In December we took two field trips. Several of us visited The Ladew Manor House, MD, which was fully decorated for the holidays, and we browsed the annual sale of wreaths, swags, kissing balls, lush greens, and fruit baskets. Also, some of us treated ourselves to an afternoon tea at Anna's Tea Room in Glenville, PA.



### FINANCIAL REPORT

By Pat Herbert

Presently we have \$567.07 in our checking account.

We spent \$75.00 for the Norfolk Fall Symposium bird garden donation.

We will need to make a donation for the Spring Symposium.

With regard to donating to the National Herb Garden Intern, we are in the process of seeking matching funds of \$100.00 from the Bank of America.

## JANUARY MINUTES-OLD BUSINESS

By Shirley Smith

January minutes to be reviewed at February meeting.

Financial statement given by Pat Herbert.

LaDew and the Christmas Tea at Anna's field trips were recapped.

Spring herb sale: Still need a site (preferably on the Trail). Candy will check with LaDew.

Access process to HSA website for Members Only demonstrated by Pat S. Username: HSA and Password: society.

October Symposium in 2010: Theme: Apples (for York County). Members to start looking for items throughout the year related to this theme.

Spring Symposium: March 27 & 28, 2009 at Stratford Hall Plantation in Stratford, Virginia. The Unit will bring a donation for the auction.

The Unit will purchase the HSA 2009 Herb of the Year Guide (Bay) for its library with treasure funds.

Pat S. will send a news release to the local papers the first of the month. Diane will remind Pat to send it.

## JANUARY MINUTES-NEW BUSINESS

A question was posed as to whether we want to be more socially active as a group, during the summer, and should we include spouses? No one objected to either point.

The Unit needs a logo.

We decided not to advertise our Unit in the "Herbarist" at this time.

We discussed the in common reading, Thyme of Death, by Susan Wittig Albert. It was

enjoyed by everyone, so we decided to order two more books by this author. Books to be paid for by individuals.

We will be provide the window display at the Shrewsbury Library for May. We can work on this at the April meeting. Annette will be in charge of this project.

Pat S. talked to Mr. Brown (of Brown's Orchards) about York Imperial apples. He asked if we could do a demonstration on herbs for

kids on October 10. We agreed we would.

Diane will be editor of our newsletter. A copy of the Unit meeting minutes will be sent to her.

We enjoyed refreshments.

Pat S. demonstrated making a facial scrub of crushed almonds, olive oil, oatmeal, and honey. We worked the scrub into our faces, rinsed, and felt the benefits of a smooth and silky complexion.



Honey and Oatmeal for facial scrubs. See "How to" article on page 5 . . . Yummy Body Scrubs.

## JANUARY MINUTES--OCTOBER 2010 UPDATES

Pat H. voted in as Chairperson.

Members to read The HSA District Symposium Gathering Handbook to determine how they can contribute to the success of the symposium.

Pat and Pat to meet with Theda at the Best Western in Gettysburg (1 Lincoln Square) on February 31 at 11:30 AM. Hotel has 119

rooms. If there is a charge for a hotel meeting room, they will ask for a discount.

Theme: apples. Apple cider vinegar with cranberries and cinnamon stick as a favor suggested. Diane to make labels.

Pat S. to contact Master Gardeners to find gardens in area to visit.

Consideration: Civil War Herbalist as a speaker.

Cocktails on Friday night are at the Unit's expense. We can bake, bring wine (possibly donations from local wineries), and make and serve herbal liqueurs and herbal crackers.

Considerations: Dressing in period costumes and presentation on herbs Friday night. Annette to check into a guest speaker from Red Lion.



Homemade Vinegar

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT FOR FALL 2010 SYMPOSIUM

By Pat Herbert

Due to the impending weather, Pat and I were not able to keep our February 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting with Theda (Sales Manager at the Gettysburg Hotel). We are going to meet with her once she gets the confirmation of the dates for the Gettysburg College Homecoming and Parents meeting.

The Hotel already has a commitment that it needs to honor before it can open up rooms to anyone else. Gettysburg typically has its weekends scheduled for the end of September or the beginning of October.

Hopefully, the scheduling will happen soon so I can let Katrinka know the proposed dates and the HSA officers can reserve dates to attend our 2010 fall symposium.

To date, Pat S. has resent the District Symposium Handbook, which provides units guidance for how to host a quality symposium, to all members. In preparation for our February meeting, please read this booklet to determine which role you can best play so we can make the Fall 2010 Symposium a success. Also, please bring this booklet to our meeting.



All roads lead to . . .  
Gettysburg

## GOOD READS

By Pat Herbert

I enjoyed reading Thyme of Death. The summaries, which I found for the other two books make these mysteries sound as exciting as the first, and I am looking forward to reading them also.

### Thyme of Death

In her first mystery, China's friend Jo dies of an apparent suicide. China searches behind the quaint façade of Pecan Springs and takes a suspicious look at everyone.

Though she finds lots of friendly faces, China is sure that behind one of them hides the heart of a killer.

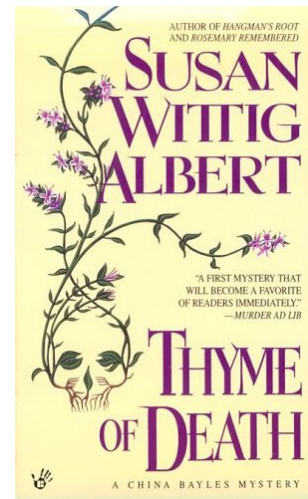
### Lavender Lies

Texas herbalist China Bayles must put her upcoming nuptials on the back burner when a murder investigation entangles her friends and neighbors.

### Rueful Death

Along with her friend Maggie, a former nun, China is looking forward to a

relaxing retreat at a Texas convent. But her quest soon takes second place to the pursuit of catching a killer. The mother superior has recently died. Although at first it was considered an accident, China quickly senses conflict in the convent. China wanted nothing more than a bit of serenity. But now her soul won't rest, and the convent won't be at peace until she identifies the guilty party.



## 11TH ANNUAL PENNSYLVANIA HERB FESTIVAL

The 11th Annual Pennsylvania Herb Festival will be held on April 17th (noon to 7:00 pm) and April 18th (8:00 am to 4:00 pm) at the York Fair Grounds. The two day event is held each April and features nationally known speakers, workshops and numerous vendors of plants, herbal crafts, and products for the gardener, cook, and crafter.

There are also information booths available for the public's benefit. Our Unit has been asked to host an information booth. This is an excellent opportunity for us to become known to the public, recruit new members, and continue our reaching out to the public. To best serve those attending the Festival, we must begin our preparations immediately.

We need to determine what kind of information we will distribute, the physical set up of the booth, a schedule for members being at the booth, who can help with set up, who can help with take down and other details.

Where can you best help? Please contact Pat S. (717.235.2823) and tell her.

**SUSAN WITTIG ALBERT** WILL BE THE FEATURED SPEAKER, **APRIL 18TH** AT THE 11TH ANNUAL PENNSYLVANIAN HERB FESTIVAL

## LOOKING AHEAD TO THE FEBRUARY MEETING

At our February 19th meeting, our old business will include planning for the April Herb Festival in York and the May showcase window dressing at the Paul Smith Library.

Part of our ongoing business will be introducing our new Susan Wittig Albert books and planning the Fall 2010 Symposium. Pat S. will demonstrate making chocolate liquor. Please see page 6 of this newsletter to help you keep your ideas in one place.

Also, we will be reviewing seed catalogs for planting and growing ideas. Some of us are more adventuresome and knowledgeable than others about starting herbs from seeds. So, we can share our experiences and insights. Please bring your catalogs so others can look them over.

Naturally, we will be indulging in chocolate. Thus far, our hospitality volunteers are:

**Pat H**—mint brownies, **Shirley**—hot chocolate, **Pat S**—chocolate cake, **Diane**—chocolate truffles, and **Annette**—homemade strawberry wine. More goodies always accepted.

Remember to bring your Notes to Myself, catalogs, goodies, District Symposium Handbook printoff, mug, and appetites.

See you the 19th at 7:00 PM.

If you would like to receive the China Bayles' weekly e-letter, *All About Thyme*, which features recipes, crafts, herb facts, and herb lore, sign up at: [MysteryPartners.com](http://MysteryPartners.com)

## GREAT EATS—SIMPLY SENSATIONAL TRUFFLES

Pat Herbert makes these Simply Sensational Truffles, from kraftfoods.com, and shared this recipe, which is perfect for our February chocolate theme.

### What You Need

2-1/2 packages. (20 squares) BAKER'S Semi-Sweet Chocolate, divided

1 pkg. (8 oz.) PHILADELPHIA softened Cream Cheese

Decorations: chopped PEANUTS COCKTAIL Peanuts and/or multi-colored sprinkles

### Make It

**MELT** 8 chocolate squares. Beat cream cheese with mixer until creamy. Blend in melted chocolate. Then refrigerate until firm.

**SHAPE** into 36 1" balls. Place on waxed paper-covered baking sheet.

**MELT** remaining chocolate. Use fork to dip truffles; return to baking sheet. **DECORATE.** Finally, **REFRIGERATE** 1 hour.

### Kraft Kitchens Tips

Substitute by using BAKER'S White Chocolate.

Sprinkle truffles with crushed peppermint candy in addition to, or instead of, the peanuts.

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Simply Sensational Truffles

PREP TIME: 15 min

Total Time: 1 hr 15 min

Makes: 18 servings,  
2 truffles each

## YUMMY BODY SCRUBS . . .

By Pat Sweetman

You can make your own scrubs and customize your personal fragrance for a fraction of the store price.

If you use an exfoliant about once a week, it offers more exfoliation and moisturizing benefits.

Scrub in a circular motion towards the heart to increase circulation.

To some honey and olive oil, you may add one or more of the following granular options...

**Salt...***Sea salt, kosher salt, Epson salt or table salt* (cheaper). Large chunks of salt are too scratchy for the skin. Grind it in the blender, food processor, or coffee mill. All salts have detoxifying and muscle relaxing properties. They sting on

minor cuts and scratches ... ergo do not salt scrub *after* shaving. Exfoliating *before* shaving will allow a closer shave. The oil from the scrub will also lubricate the razor.

### Flax Seed ...

Very lubricating for dry skin when ground fine.

### Crushed almonds...

Very exfoliating, but can be too coarse for facial skin if not crushed very fine.

**Sugar...***brown sugar, white, natural cane sugar.* White sugar is cheapest and will work the same as natural cane sugar. Brown sugar is gentler and warmer (good for the face) and has a yummy fragrance. Sugar scrubs do not have the muscle relaxing qualities that salt does.

### Oatmeal...

Very gentle, but not aggressive as an exfoliant. Great for dry, itchy skin.

## MAY WINDOW DRESSING FOR THE LIBRARY

According to its mission statement, "The Herb Society of America is dedicated to promoting the knowledge, use and delight of herbs through educational programs, research, and sharing the experience of its members with the community". As a Unit of the HSA, we are obligated to carry out the HSA's mission. In May, we will be following this mission as we dress the showcase

window of the Paul Smith Library, Shrewsbury, in recognition of National Herb Month.

In addition to exemplifying the mission, this window dressing project provides benefits to both the participants and the public. Among the participants' benefits are learning more about herbs, window displays, and fellow herbies.

The public's benefits include learning more about herbs, the Mason-Dixon Unit, and the HSA.

Annette Steger has volunteered to oversee this project, but help is needed by all to make this a successful experience. Please see page 6 for a space to keep your ideas, and check your calendar for your helping availability.



Dressing: May 1, 2009

Undressing: May 31, 2009

## NOTES TO MYSELF

For the February 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, I will write my responses to the following questions as I make them.

What is a good theme and title for the PA Herb Festival booth? What would be appropriate handouts?

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What is a good theme and title for the May window dressing? What should we include in the display?

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What is a catchy title for our Fall 2010 Symposium? (Our theme is apples).

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Which herbs would I consider starting from seed?

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Which herbs am I considering purchasing as plants?

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**THINK AHEAD**~Which herbs can I provide for the Unit's May herb sale? (No Chives-Need 12 plants).

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What questions do I have?

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75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**WILD THYMES**

NEWSLETTER OF THE MASON-DIXON UNIT OF THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA

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**WEB:** [www.mdunithsa.org](http://www.mdunithsa.org)

**NOTE:** The HSA is no longer sending members information about the seed exchange. Go to the "For Members Only" section of the HSA website for this information.

**CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS**

- February 19 **Monthly Meeting of Mason-Dixon Unit at 7 pm**  
2595 Rehmeysers Hollow Road, Stewartstown, PA  
Information: Pat at 717-235-2823
- February 26- **MidAtlantic Garden Show**  
March 1 Toyota Arena of York Fair Expo Center, York, PA  
Information: [www.midatlanticgardenshow.com](http://www.midatlanticgardenshow.com)
- March 14 **Master Gardeners' Garden Wise Symposium**  
York Suburban High School, 1800 Hollywood Drive, York, PA  
Information: Connie at 717.840.7408 or [cxs51@psu.edu](mailto:cxs51@psu.edu)
- March 27 - **MidAtlantic Multi-Unit Social Symposium**  
28 Stratford Hall Plantation, 483 Great House Rd, Stratford, VA  
Information: Mark Raglan at 804-722-0152
- April 17-18 **Pennsylvania Herb Festival**  
York Expo Center/Memorial Hall, 334 Carlisle Ave., York, PA  
Info: <http://www.pennsylvaniaherbfestival.com/services.html>
- May 1 **Paul Smith Library Window Dressing Display**  
80 Constitution Avenue, Shrewsbury, PA  
Information: Annette Steger at [stegeraj@aol.com](mailto:stegeraj@aol.com)
- May 2 **Montpelier Festival of Herbs, Tea and Arts**  
9652 Muirkirk Road Laurel, MD  
Information: 301-953-1993
- May 8-9 **Landis Valley Herb Faire**  
9am-5pm Landis Valley Museum, 2451 Kissel Hill Rd., Lancaster, PA  
\$8 per person Information: Cindy Kirby-Reedy at [c-creedy@state.pa.us](mailto:c-creedy@state.pa.us) or 717 569-0401, ext. 214
- June 6-8 **HSA Educational Conference**  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Information: <http://herbsociety.org/confer.php>
- June 14-16 **27<sup>th</sup> Annual Herbal Delight Symposium**  
Conrad Weiser HS, 347 E. Penn Avenue, Robesonia, PA  
Information: Barb Jefferis at 610-375-8061 or Priscilla Plucinsky at [pap403@comcast.net](mailto:pap403@comcast.net)

**MEMBERSHIP CONTACT INFORMATION FOR MASON-DIXON UNIT**

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- Diane L.M. Wittig (Hospitality, Newsletter Editor).....[dianelmwittig@hotmail.com](mailto:dianelmwittig@hotmail.com)

THINK NEW MEMBERS... THINK NEW MEMBERS... THINK NEW MEMBERS... THINK NEW MEMBERS