



PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

January 2013

Volume 20, Number 5

January 1
New Year's Day

January 5
Twelfth Night

January 15
Board Meeting
Festival Hill Library
(9:00 a.m.)

January 26
Wolf Full Moon



MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: January 10, 2013

Time: 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet
10:00 a.m. Program followed by Meeting

Location: Round Top Christian Fellowship Church
440 East Mill Street, Round Top, Texas

Directions: From Highway 290, take Texas 237 south, turn left on East Mill Street. The church is on your right.

Program: Gourmet Texas Pasta

Speaker: Kim McDaniel

Angel: Georgia Sowers

Hosts: Pat and Mike Cox, Verena Aeschbacher, and Mary Ann and Oscar Hillegeist

Lunch: Pasta Favorites

Book Club: The Samurai's Garden by Gail Tsukiyama



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Happy New Year to everyone! Here we are: beginning a new cycle of the seasons. We just had the longest night of the year, and now the days will be slowly growing longer. With our recent cold weather, my herb garden is resting, but I should be doing some weeding. The vegetable garden suffered with the recent frosts, but I still have kale, carrots, and broccoli growing. The onions and garlic seem slowed, but perhaps they will get growing soon.

Our grapevines are dormant, and we will soon be pruning them. Somehow I agreed to make 1,000 cuttings for an area nursery. Will I ever learn to say "No"?

During these slow times in the garden, I hope everyone is working on something for the Thyme Well Spent Shop. There are some excellent opportunities for group projects (see Workshops later in this newsletter), and there are many things we can do on our own. I agreed to make fig preserves, and I am going to try to get some soap made as well.

And of course, I cannot avoid my full-time employment. Unfortunately there is not much of a winter slow-down at the office, but I did manage to get in time with the family over the holidays. I hope you were able to do the same. All of the other things we have to do are important, but family is the top of the list for me.

We had a wonderful December meeting — with more door prizes than I could count. The January meeting promises to be interesting as well. I have purchased Gourmet Texas Pasta in the past, and the flavors were really wonderful. I have a grandson who is allergic to all additives, and this pasta is something that I can serve him with no worries. I look forward to hearing Kim McDaniel tell us about the company's production.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the January meeting and perhaps at a workshop as well.

Linda L. Rowlett
Pioneer Unit Chair



FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

At our December meeting, Henry Flowers treated us all to a wonderful presentation about the varieties and uses for the herb rosemary. The morning was very informative, and we all left much wiser about the folklore, history, and modern uses for rosemary. Several members took home door prizes provided by Henry and Lois Sutton. Mary Reeves closed the meeting by tossing out the rosemary bouquet/tussie-mussie to a very lucky member. It was a great program to begin our holiday season.

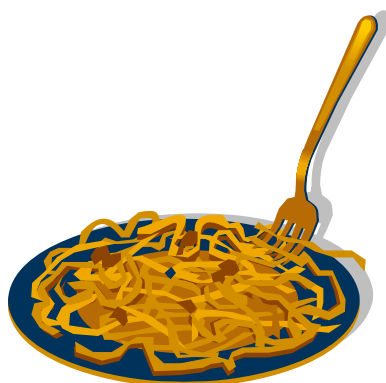
The meeting was followed by a spectacular meal in Menke House. Chef John, his staff, and Henry did a tremendous job to make our Pioneer Unit feel special. We all enjoyed the wonderful food with hints of rosemary everywhere.

The Christmas season has been so full of family, visiting, and fun, that many of us haven't found the time to sift through Issue 78-2012 of The Herbarist. You will be delighted to find an article written by Henry Flowers entitled "The Rose, Queen of Delight and Use." Also Dr. Lois Sutton has written an article on "Chenopodiaceae-A Plant Family Worth Studying." We are very lucky to have these two folks in our Pioneer Unit. Be sure and check out this issue!

On January 10, 2013, we will welcome Kim McDaniel from Gourmet Texas Pasta in Austin. She will speak to us about her experiences with pasta making and spices. We will gather at Round Top Christian Fellowship Church, 440 E. Mill Street, in Round Top. She promises to bring some of her product for purchase if we would like.

Looking forward to seeing everyone then!

Diana Reed
Program Chair



Rosemary – The Quintessential Herb

Botanical Name: *Rosmarinus officinalis*

Family: Lamiaceae (Mint Family)

Ros = "dew" and *marinus* = "sea" *officinalis* essentially means that it is of the "officinarum" (medieval pharmacy) and has a history of medicinal usage

Common Names: Rosemary, Dew of the Sea, Sea Dew, Elf Leaf, Guardrobe, Incensier, Compass Weed, and Polar Plant

Other Languages: French – *Romarin*, Spanish – *Romero* or *Rosmarino*, Italian – *Romario*, German and Swedish – *Rosmarin*, Chinese – *mi-tieh-hsiang*, Arabic – *iklil al-ajbal*

Origin: Rosemary is native to the Mediterranean where it is more common in western and northern regions.

Other species: *Rosmarinus officinalis* is by far the chief member of its genus, but there are two other species: *Rosmarinus eriocalyx* and *R. tomentosus*. Both of these are restricted to southwestern Spain and northwestern Morocco.

Morphology: Rosemary, like other members of the mint family, has opposite leaves and "suarish" stems – but not as distinctly so as those of the genus *Salvia*. Its leaves are evergreen, linear, and have smooth edges that generally tend to curl slightly under the leaf blade. Because of the similarity in appearance to other evergreens, the leaves are often referred to as "needles." The flowers are basically bilabiate, with a much larger lower lip. The lower lip is often marked with distinctive spots and lines and makes a great landing pad for bees – the flower's pollinators. Two stamens curl up and under the upper lip (two conjoined petals) and then outward from the flower with the pistil similarly placed and between the stamens. The other two of the flower's five petals stick out and down from the sides of the flower. The flowers tend to form in clusters at the leaf axils. Flower color is generally a shade of soft to medium blue or lavender-blue, but there are some varieties with white or pinkish flower coloration. In growth habit the plant can either be prostrate and sprawling or upright and shrubby, or somewhere in between. Generally the prostrate varieties tend to bloom much more than the upright varieties. Seeds are small nutlets and each flower can produce up to four seeds.

Attributes: Gender — male; planet — Sun; element — fire; zodiac sign — Leo; powers — protection, love, lust, mental powers, exorcism, purification, healing, sleep, and youth.

History in Brief:

Rosemary has been found in the wrappings of Egyptian mummies.

Greek students believed that rosemary enhanced memory and brain function and thus they wore it in their hair and massaged its oil onto their foreheads when studying for exams.

The Romans adorned their household gods with rosemary and purified their flocks with its smoke.

In the France of the Medieval Ages, rosemary was often burned along with Juniper in hospitals to ward off contagion.

Folklore:

It is said that while Mary and Joseph were fleeing from Israel with the infant Jesus, Mary laid her blue cloak on a rosemary bush. Being so honored the flowers turned from white to blue.



Put a bowl of flour under a rosemary bush on Midsummer's Eve (June 23rd). In the morning the initials of a future spouse will be traced in the flour.

Rosemary is said to attract fairies.

"Put the leaves [of rosemary] under thy bedde and thou shalt be delivered of evil dreams."

-Banke's Herbal, 1525

Language: In the Language of Flowers rosemary says "your presence revives me" and is a symbol of friendship, loyalty, and remembrance. Traditionally it is carried by brides in weddings and by mourners at funerals.

"Grow it for two ends, it matters not at all,
Be't for my bridal or my burial."

-Robert Herrick, 17th Century Poet

Literature: Rosemary has often been mentioned in writings of various forms. Here are a few:

Lavender's blue, dilly dilly, rosemary's green,
When I am king, dilly, dilly, you shall be queen.
Who told you so, dilly, dilly, who told you so?
'Twas my own heart, dilly, dilly, that told me so.
-17th century children's rhyme

Miss Ainslie gathered a bit of rosemary, crushing it between her white fingers. "See," she said, "some of us are like that - it takes a blow to find the sweetness in our souls."

-Lavender and Old Lace -Myrtle Reed (1874–1911) American Poet and Journalist

"Doth not rosemary and Romeo begin both with the same letters?"

-Romeo and Juliet

Interestingly, to my knowledge rosemary is not mentioned in any of the major books of religion. If you find any evidence to the contrary, please let me know.

Culinary Uses: There are virtually few areas of the culinary arts in which rosemary isn't used. It is used in pestos, butters, oils, vinegars, cheeses, on the grill, in soups, in beverages, to season meats, in salt and dried herb blends, in the traditional bouquet garni, and in desserts and ice creams as well. Even the flowers can be used as a garnish or candied if one has the patience to deal with their small stature. All rosemary plants are edible (if grown organically), but different varieties have different essential oil contents and thus some are considered more "desirable" than others (and will be discussed later). For use in foods it is usually infused and later removed or chopped finely as the whole leaves can tough.

Medicinal Use: "Rosemary is an aromatic, restorative herb that relaxes spasms, relieves pain, and increases perspiration rate. It also stimulates the liver and gall bladder, improves digestion and circulation, and controls many pathogenic organisms. Rosemary is **used internally** for depression, apathy, nervous exhaustion, headaches and migraines associated with nervous tension or feeling cold, poor circulation and digestive problems associated with anxiety. It is **used externally** for rheumatism, arthritis, neuralgia, muscular injuries, wounds, dandruff, scurf, and hair loss."

-From Encyclopedia of Herbs and Their Uses by Deni Bown

"Rosemary has **antioxidant and antimutagenic** properties which come from the content of phenolic diterpenes, particularly carnosic acid, carnosol, epirosmanol, and isorosmanol. Rosemary oil has been demonstrated to be **antifungal, antibacterial, and antiviral**. Researchers have found that the volatile oil of rosemary leaves may be useful in treating diabetes and dementia."

- From The Big Book of Herbs by Thomas De Baggio and Arthur O. Tucker, Ph.D.

Warnings: The use of large quantities of rosemary in foods has been shown to increase menstrual flow in women and thus it is recommended that pregnant women limit, but not necessarily exclude, its consumption. Large amounts may also irritate the kidneys and stomach. As with most essential oils rosemary oils should not be consumed internally and should be diluted with carrier oils if used externally. Use of rosemary oil in aromatherapy has been shown to increase locomotor activity – which can be good or bad, depending upon the situation.

It is the policy of The Herb Society of America not to advise or recommend herbs for medicinal or health use. This information is intended for educational purposes only and should not be considered as a recommendation or an endorsement of any particular medical or health treatment.

Essential Oils: Rosemary contains a very large number of essential oils. The main oils are: alpha pinene, camphene, 1,8-cineole, camphor, bornyl acetate, and borneol. Spain, France, and Morocco supply most of the extracted essential oils on today's market. Variance in plant variety, climate, and processing can produce oils that can vary greatly from one to the other.

Commercial Use: Commercially antioxidant chemicals are extracted from rosemary and are used for a variety of purposes. Here are a few: to prolong the freshness of poultry, stabilize and preserve pet foods, stabilize soy oils and potato chips, and also to stabilize many cosmetics.

Craft Use: Rosemary has a long tradition of use in crafts. In floral design it has been historically used in wedding and funeral arrangements and is often used to make wreaths and swags. It can be used in potpourri blends, dream pillows, as bookmarks to scent pages, in pinecones as fire starters, and can also be used to create a variety of natural dyes for fibers.

Culture:

Hardiness: Most in USDA zone 8, but some varieties hardy into zones 7 and 6.

Soil: Prefers a neutral to alkaline soil.

Light: Full sun is best, but it is tolerant of light shade.

Water: Moist, but well-drained; drought resistant once established.

Pruning: Depends upon variety – some don't need it at all, some need only to be thinned, and some can be routinely pruned to form thicker shrubs.
Never prune hard. Routinely remove dead wood.

Fertilize: Rarely – best to use organic or slow-release fertilizers.

Mulch: Use a thin layer or an inorganic mulch, such as pea gravel.

Container Culture:

Plants will need routine watering and pruning, but be careful not to overwater.

Fertilize lightly and routinely or use slow-release fertilizers.

Pot up when they get root bound or root-prune to control the size.

They should not be kept indoors for prolonged periods.

They make wonderful topiary and bonsai specimens.

Pests: Rosemary is normally not prone to having pest problems, but it can happen. Look out for spider mites, mealy bugs, caterpillars, leaf hoppers, whiteflies, and thrips. Rosemary is very deer resistant! Even more problematic than insect pests are **bacterial and fungal root pathogens**. Rosemary prefers a lean, well-drained soil and is often attacked by root pathogens if it has poor drainage and/or is kept too wet. If you have poor drainage, then raise the planting or grow in containers. **Powdery mildew** (a fungus) can also be a problem on some varieties if they don't get enough sun or air circulation.

Propagation: Rosemary can either be propagated by seed or by cuttings. Seeds are small, hard to collect, and tend to be slow and erratic in germination and named cultivars will not remain true to type if propagated this way. The preferred method of propagation is by tip cuttings. They can be rooted in a variety of soilless mixes (potting soil) if they are well-drained and can also be rooted in water. I find that rooting hormones are not necessary and if you do use them I would recommend ones with weaker hormone concentrations. Tip layering is an alternative propagation method that allows you to propagate new plants in the ground around a mother plant while the stems remain attached. It is a bit slower but very reliable and easy if you just want to propagate a few new plants and don't want to deal with maintaining the proper environment for cuttings.

Varieties: There are hundreds of varieties available in the US and around the world. Some are highly distinct, some are not, and in quite a few cases a variety may go by different names in different places.

Best Culinary Varieties: As mentioned previously the essential oil makeup of rosemary varieties will influence their aroma and taste. While all rosemary varieties are edible, some are considered more "desirable" because they have less pine and camphor oils and thus taste less "medicinal." These are: 'Arp', 'Madalene Hill' (aka 'Hill Hardy'), 'Tuscan Blue', 'Salem', 'Gorizia', and 'Spice Islands'.

Most Cold Hardy: 'Arp' is noted as the most cold hardy of all and is known to survive in some areas of zone 6. 'Hill Hardy' and 'Salem' are also notable for their cold hardiness.

Other Varieties of Note: There are many wonderful varieties to choose from and here are just a few:

Upright: 'Joyce DeBaggio' (aka 'Golden Rain') – golden edged leaves with rich purple flowers

'Baby P.J.' – small leaves and small stature – possibly the smallest variety

'Wonderful' – somewhat sprawling and a prolific bloomer with soft blue flowers

'Benenden Blue' – a dense grower good for topiary or hedging

'Herb Cottage' (aka 'Foresteri')- a good shrubby and very aromatic variety

Prostrate: 'Blue Lady'- a large and prolific blooming variety

'Haifa'- a very small and tidy plant good for a container or small space

'Majorca Pink'- pink flowers and rangy, somewhat wild growth habit

'Renzel's'/ 'Irene'- newer, notable variety with flowing habit and strong blooming habit

'Santa Barbara' – vigorous, spreading habit and lots of blooms

Landscape Uses: individual specimens, container plants, hedges, ground covers (high ones that you can't walk on), and draping over walls (prostrate varieties of course).

"There's rosemary, that's for remembrance. Pray you, love, remember." – Ophelia in Hamlet

Henry Flowers

January 2013



MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
PIONEER UNIT
DECEMBER 13, 2012

Linda Rowlett, Chair, opened the meeting.

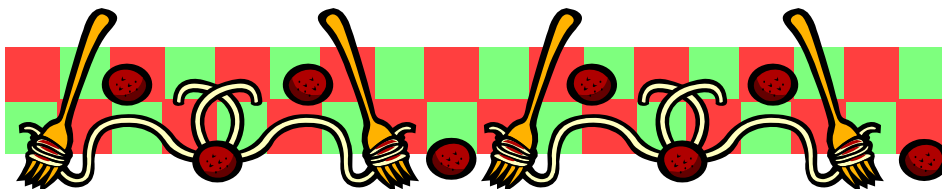
Georgia Sowers, Membership, introduced visitors Pam Traylor, Kathy LeBlanc, Mary Doebbling. Affiliate members Sara Holland, Susan Wood, Elayne Kouzounis, Susan Aboukalkah, and Peggy Cook also attended. Finally, former members Mitchell Herzog and Norman Hubbard both attended with their wives, active members Ronda Herzog and Wanda Hubbard.

Diana Reed, Programs, introduced Henry Flowers, who provided members with an informative presentation about "Rosemary." Following the program, Diana thanked the hostesses for their efforts. She reminded membership that the January meeting topic will be "Gourmet Texas Pasta" and that product will be available for purchase. Diana then began awarding several door prizes, including several different varieties of rosemary plants.

Linda noted that the upcoming Tools Workshop, January 22nd, will be held in the greenhouse. The workshop is limited to 8 participants and any questions should be forwarded to Ginger Heath. Linda also reported that two scholarship applications have been received. A decision is expected later today.

The meeting was then adjourned for lunch at the Menke House.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Cornwell, Secretary



MEMBER INFORMATION

We had a wonderfully festive turnout with lots of holiday socializing at our December meeting. Cheryl Easley's friend Pam Traylor visited us for her third time and is getting to know many of our members. We're looking forward to Pam perhaps joining us as an active member soon. And our former active member Kathy LeBlanc, invited back by Carla Lessard last month, was with us again as well. A surprise visit from Mary Doebbling, our former District Delegate, added to the enjoyable meeting, and she expressed interest in becoming our new affiliate member. Mary will be a great addition to our Unit. It was a pleasure to see Elayne Kouzounis again; she has visited us on several occasions and accompanied our stalwart and giving affiliate member Susan Wood. Both of these ladies are active members with the South Texas Unit. And thank you, Susan,, for the nice gifts of Botanical Interests seeds that you're so frequently generous with. Affiliate member Sara Holland brought her delicious rosemary-lemon cookies and then surprise gifts at lunch of White Chocolate Rosemary candy for everyone -- thank you, Sara! Our faithful affiliate members Susan Abouhalkah and Peggy Cook were with us, and it's always enjoyable to see them. Last but not least our former member Norman Hubbard attended with his wife, active member Wanda Hubbard and their granddaughter Chloe, and Mitchell Herzog, member of HSA, joined us with his wife, active member Ronda Herzog. (Which reminds me: we should have mentioned last month that visitor Alice Kyle is a member of HSA.)

We welcome all of our visitors and affiliates and look forward to seeing you often. As always, if you have any questions about membership, please contact me at gzsowers@att.net or call [979-836-8228](tel:979-836-8228) so I might help you. Wishing all of you a blessed and herbaceous New Year!

Georgia Sowers
Membership Chair



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- January 1 — Carolyn Thomas
- January 3 — Patty Godfrey
- January 18 — Verena Aeschbacher
- January 19 — Oscar Hillegeist and Sara Parker
- January 26 — Georgia Sowers
- January 28 — Euphanel Goad

WORKSHOPS

Notice: GARDEN TOOL MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP IS FULL. If you wish to be added to the Wait List, please notify Ginger Heath or Carolyn Thomas. The workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, January 22, 9:00 a.m., in the Greenhouse at Festival Hill. The original 8 who have signed up will be contacted by email the week prior as a reminder, and a list of helpful supplies to bring will be included. At that time we will want a definite commitment so that we can fill all slots. This workshop will be invaluable to those who have hand tools that need cleaning, sharpening, lubricating, etc. (gbh105@gmail.com or cthomas1138@aol.com)



Tea Party Workshop

The workshop to make teas for Thyme Well Spent is scheduled for Wednesday, February 6th at 10:00 a.m., at 9751 FM 390 West, Burton, Texas please contact Cathy at [979-289-2012](tel:979-289-2012) to let her know if you are coming.

Needed for making teas: dried spearmint and dried double mint. If you have either mint, please dry one to four cups for use in making the teas. Notify Cathy about which mints you can provide.

Cathy Comiskey

Wreath Making Workshop

At this writing, we are attempting to schedule a wreath making workshop. We will be rough-pruning our vines either January 19th or February 2nd, and a workshop the next day would be great. If the weather is amenable, we could sit outside and fashion wreaths for Thyme Well Spent. There would be plenty of material for everyone to make a wreath to keep and one for the Pioneer Unit.

Let me know which date would work for you.


Linda L. Rowlett



January 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BSG = Botany Study Group	FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden	1	2	3 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	4	5
6	7	8 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	9	10 Pioneer Unit Meeting	11	12
13	14	15 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	16	17 BSG 8:30 to noon	18	19 SG Workday 8:00 to 10:00 (tentative)
20	21	22 Tool Maintenance Workshop	23	24 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	25	26
27	28	29 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	30	31		

February 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	6 Tea Making Workshop	7 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	8	9
10	11	12 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	13	14 Pioneer Unit Meeting 	15	16 SG Workday 8:00 to 10:00 (tentative)
17	18	19 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	20	21 BSG 8:30 to noon	22	23
24	25	26 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	27	28 FH Workday 8:30 to noon		



PIONEER PATHS

Volume 20

Editor: Linda L. Rowlett, Ph.D.

Pioneer Paths is a publication of The Herb Society of America, Pioneer Unit. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$10.00 per year.

The Mission Statement of The Herb Society of America: "To promote the knowledge, use, and delight of herbs through educational programs, research, and sharing the experience of its members with the community."

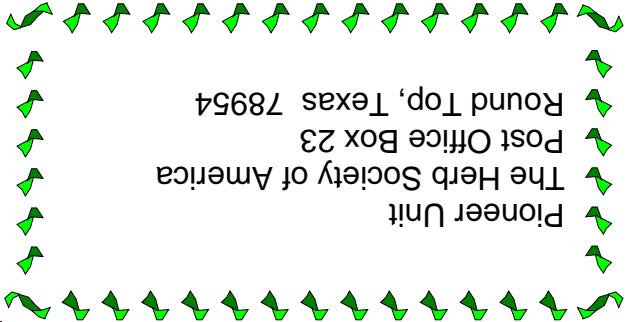
Chair—Linda L. Rowlett

Vice Chair Programs—Diana Reed

Vice Chair Membership—Georgia Sowers

Secretary—Karen Cornwell

Treasurer—Janie Plummer



Pioneer Unit
The Herb Society of America
Post Office Box 23
Round Top, Texas 78954