

## Geddy Garden News

---

The temperature tells us that summer has arrived. Not only do we feel the warmth of the season, but we are enjoying the scents of summer. With a Linden tree located at our shop door and another one at our back door, the sweet fragrance of the honey-scented Lindens permeates the air and we are surrounded by the undeniable signs of summer. Oliver Goldsmith wrote "*aromic plants bestow no spicy fragrance while they grow, But crushed or trodden to the ground, Diffuse their balmy sweets around.*" That describes the many herbs growing in our garden such as Rosemary, Lemon Balm, Lavender, Ginger, and Basil. Other nice odors are coming from flowers such as the Phlox in the perennial garden.

Although suffering from lack of rain, the garden is managing to survive, with a lot of help from its friends. The staff and the Junior Interpreters have been most helpful in drawing the well water and watering the plants.

One plant that seems to thrive in all weather and soil condition is Calendula, or Pot Marigold. Shakespeare called it "winking Mary-buds." The name Calendula is derived from *Kalends*, meaning the first of each month. Calendula blooms year round in the Mediterranean climate, which is where it received that appropriate name. The flowers are antiseptic and when crushed with olive oil can be applied to open cuts and sores or blisters. Most all of the herbs not only contribute to the wonderful smells of summer, but also offer us very useful medical remedies. Rosemary tea can be taken for headache relief and it also serves to calm the nervous system. Lavender can be taken for your sleepless nights or insomnia. The Lemon Balm, like Calendula, also serves to prevent infection in open cuts and cold sores. You can also dry the leaves and make a tea that will calm your nerves and relax you.

I planted a bit of Ginger which is known to settle the upset stomach, and even our weeds, the dandelions, serve a useful purpose. When properly used, they can act as a liver purifier, can clean up your skin, shine your hair, and strengthen your bones!!!

Research in the association of plants with healing is taking place throughout our country. One-fourth of all medicine today is derived from plants. Missouri Botanical Gardens is conducting research in faraway places like Madagascar, in an effort to find and produce life-saving drugs and treatments for such illnesses as Hodgkin's Disease, Cancer, HIV and AIDS. Rare plants are collected, catalogued, and preserved for further study. Medical science has become aware of the importance of such research. The Vitex tree, also known as the Chaste tree, was credited in colonial times with having sedative properties. Today it has a new important role in the prevention of a major medical problem in older women, osteoporosis.

"*Let his breakfast be mother of thyme tea, gathered in June.*" John Wesley made that suggestion as a treatment for nervous disorders. Although he is most remembered for his religious contributions, Wesley made other significant contributions. He wrote a book called Primitive Remedies which included a useful diet for extreme fat. I offer you this diet as it can be applied today, as well as in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. "*Use a total vegetable diet. I knew of one who was entirely cured of this by living a year thus: she breakfasted and supped on milk and water (with bread) and dined on turnips, carrots, and other roots, drinking water.*" So if your goal is to get into shape for the summer, you may wish to try John Wesley's advice.

*Janet Guthrie*

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR. LIBRARY  
COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG FOUNDATION  
P. O. Box 1776  
Williamsburg, Virginia 23187