

THE WEED SOCIETY / OF NEW SOUTH WALES

P.O. Box K287, Haymarket, N.S.W., 2000

PRESIDENT Dr. L. B. Lowe

HON. SECRETARY Mr. W.J. Burke

November, 1978

NEWSLETTER No. 5 /78
Price - 10 cents

Annual Dinner

This year's annual dinner will be held at Harry's Bar and Restaurant, The Rocks, Sydney.

DATE: Friday, 24th November.

TIME: 7.00 for 7.30 pm

PLACE: Harry's Bar and Restaurant,
13-17 Playfair Street,
THE ROCKS.

COST: \$15.00 per person.

The meal, which will be a 3-course meal and coffee with a choice of entree, main course and dessert, will be held outside in a very historic setting in a delightful spot in the Rocks area. The price includes a generous quantity of house wine (red and white). Ample parking exists in Playfair Street.

Remember the good time we all had at last year's annual dinner. This promises to be equally as good; so don't forget to attend.

I will be attending the Annual Dinner at Harry's Bar and Restaurant.
Enclosed is my payment for \$.....being forpersons.

Cheques should be made payable to the Weed Society of New South Wales and together with this slip sent to

The Weed Society of New South Wales, *paid.*
P.O. Box K287,
HAYMARKET. N.S.W. 2000

Some notes from a letter received by Andrew Leys from Eric Cuthbertson touring Europe.

"A few words on the travels of yours truly in the old world. After a week or so recuperating from the rigours of the new world we set off in the van for a tour of England; northwest, north and northeast strictly. Strongly stock-minded throughout, there are large heads of cattle, dairy and otherwise and sheep of all sorts, kinds, sizes and cussedness. Agriculture wise, wheat and barley seemed uppermost cereal wise with more oats in Scotland. Harvest was expected to be a record despite delaying heavy rains and what was, to me at any rate, backward crops in many areas, though harvest was advanced in some southern areas, grain drying I felt was inevitable, some crops being completely weather blackened and I feel shoot too.

In France the effect of land tenure of centuries results in pocket handkerchief areas, all unfenced, of wheat, barley and sugarbeet in the north and surprisingly numerous areas of corn, tobacco, sugarbeet, tomatoes, artichokes, centrally, with patches of grape, tailing off to wide areas of vines, with corn and milo, globe artichoke and other exotics in the currently very dry Mediterranean at the end of a long hot summer.

Weeds of all kinds abound, many I do not know, but the old ubiquitous ones are also present; Echium sp., Heliotropium, Amaranthus, the chickweeds, Solanums, Xanthiums (Bathurst and the Noogoora group), Datura's and among the others of course Skeleton Weed, mainly as occasional plants but at one stage apparently growing from a church roof - I feel this one was possibly prickly lettuce, but as I couldn't climb the 100 ft or so to confirm, it sounds good."

News of members

- Mike Hood, Orange is going to Wye College in England for 12 months to do a Postgraduate Diploma in Plant Protection.
- Barry Lowe, the Weed Society President this year, is currently in North America for approximately a month.
- Mike Barrett, ICI (Aust) Ltd., has been appointed as Secretary-Treasurer for C.A.W.S.S.

Some extracts from the book "Enjoy your Weeds", by Audrey W. Hatfield.

"DANDELION. This is a naughty weed but an excellent culinary and medicinal herb, with a certain universal fame as a 'potty herb' as many of its popular names suggest - pee-a-bed, wet-a-bed, and in France, Pissenlit. The plant contains elements that healthily stimulate man's whole system, his bloodstream, liver, digestive organs and especially his kidneys and bladder, so if it is taken too greedily the effect could be inconvenient and childish.

As a garden weed, the dandelion, like the nettle, absorbs about three times the amount of iron from the soil taken up by any other plant. It is a miser too, for copper and for anything else worthwhile in soil nutrients that it can lay its roots to. Above ground, its beautiful, round, flat flowers like heraldic suns provide a rich pollen food and nectar for honeybees and wild bees necessary for pollinating garden crops. But the plant, like some fruits, exhales a breath that is charged with ethylene gas which hinders the growth of neighbouring plants and gives the same depressing effects that buttercups give, dwarfing plants and causing them to produce premature, pigmy fruits. The thieving dandelion is only acceptable to other plants when it is composted, rotted down, disintegrated to make available its hoard of iron, copper and other things they need. Or it can be made into liquid fertilizer and folia-feed which can help to remedy other plants' deficiencies.

The dandelion also remedies our deficiencies, as it can provide the best source of copper in our diet, along with iron and some other constituents such as taraxacin, inulin, potash that are contained in its milky juice and have their particular medicinal values. Being non-poisonous, the plant is harmless and entirely beneficial. Though it could not then be scientifically known why it worked, its cures had been experienced for many centuries when they were recorded by Arabian physicians in the tenth century. In England there survives from Tudor times a household book which includes a fascinating list of medicinal, cordial and toilet waters to be regularly infused for the noble's family use, and 'Water of Tantelyon' is among them.

Tea made from dandelion roots or leaves is of great assistance in relieving disorders of a bilious or dropsical nature; it is also a mild aperient; it aids weak digestions and helps to combat anaemia. The dandelion has an ancient reputation for helping to clear gravel, and for dispersing skin eruptions or complexion disorders. A tea made by boiling 2 oz. of the root or the leaves in 1 quart of water, boiled down to 1 pt, is highly effective in cases of eczema, scurvy and all such stubborn skin complaints and this infusion should be taken in wineglassful doses every 3 hours.

The plant's botanical name, *Taraxacum officinale*, arose from medieval Latin from the Persian name meaning bitter potherb, sold in shops. And as an ancient and well-liked culinary herb that can supply us not only with the valuable elements but with more Vitamins C and A than almost any other vegetable or fruit, the dandelion should be of great interest to all gardeners for providing a variety of appetizing things from those well-nourished, upstanding, juicy specimens flourishing in beds and borders. All parts of the plant have their long-established uses which should be exploited in the kitchen as they used to be. In many an old kitchen garden of palace, manor, rectory and cottage, rows of dandelions bred up to

giant size could once be seen, manured and pampered to be served at table, some to be blanched like chicory. When splendid salads were appreciated dandelion's bitterish leaves and shredded or chopped roots with its sweet, tangy flowers were important ingredients.

It is always interesting to know how plants came by their popular names and the name dandelion is a corruption of the French 'dent le lion', which is from the Latin name *Dens leonis*. But nobody appears to be sure which part of the plant could be likened to the animal's tooth; some say the golden petals may have been thought to resemble the gilded teeth of the heraldic lion, others prefer the name to be an allusion to the long white tap-root. A more likely explanation seems to have arisen from a surgeon's report in the fifteenth century. He was so impressed with this plant's ability to overcome certain ailments that he said it was as strong and powerful as a lion's tooth.

The dandelion's flowers make it easily recognizable as a member of the daisy tribe, the Compositae family, of which many members are notable for their powerful secretions."

EDITORIAL COMMENT (from WSSA Newsletter V6 N3, Jean H. Dawson,
Editor)

A great deal of interest in finding new methods for using old herbicides was evident at the meeting of the Western Society of Weed Science (USA) in March. A symposium was devoted to the subject, "Techniques to manipulate herbicidal activities." Various speakers outlined methods of improving the performance of herbicides through controlled release formulations, microbial inhibitors, chemical protectants, carbon protectants, plug planting techniques, and subsurface placement and other new techniques of herbicide application. One speaker stated that his approach to developing control for a problem weed in a crop was not to look for an effective herbicide that the crop tolerated, but, rather, to take a herbicide known to control the weed, and then to strive to develop methods whereby that herbicide could be applied in a manner safe to the crop.

In today's world, where the attitude and actions of registration authorities inhibit and delay the registration of new herbicides, finding new and improved methods of using the herbicides we already have may be more fruitful than looking for new compounds.

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

1. The 32nd meeting of the Expert Committee on Weeds (Western Section) will be held on November 28, 29, 30, 1978 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada. Contact Dr. R. Ashford, Crop Science Department, University of Saskatchewan for further information.

EDITOR'S NOTE. - the Expert Committee on Weeds was formerly called the Canada Weed Committee. The change in name of the organisation appears to be a move to have weeds and matters dealing with weed control upgraded. These meetings are interesting in that 3 half days are devoted to research appraisal and planning of the weed programmes in the four Western Canadian Provinces. Only 2 half days are formal sessions where papers are presented. These sessions are devoted entirely to the following topics:-

- a critical analysis of the herbicide evaluation system in Canada.
- herbicide use, present and future.

2. IWSS/EWRS/FAO Conference, Rome, September, 1980.

After lengthy negotiations and much background work the International Weed Science Society will hold its first Conference in Rome, FAO in in early September, 1980. The European Weed Research Society is to co-host the Conference in collaboration with FAO. Regional Weed Science Societies and their affiliates are to be invited to assist with the programme.

3. Asian Pacific Weed Science Society Conference, November 26-30th, 1979.

Planning for this conference is proceeding and the 2nd circular has now been prepared. This includes brief programme details, notes to authors presenting papers, deadlines for papers, details of pre-conference tours etc. Two pre-conference tours are being offered:-

- (i) a 3 day trip to Canberra and the M.I.A. and
- (ii) a 3 day trip to Narrabri-Moree-Surfer's Paradise.

IMPORTANT - abstracts of papers are due at the end of January, 1979 and the full paper is to be submitted by the end of May. Everybody who wishes to present a paper is asked to start preparing the abstract as soon as possible.

BIOLOGICAL CONTROL OF WEEDS IN AUSTRALIA.

Three organisations are carrying out research work into biological control of weeds in Australia. These are as follows:-

1. Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization.
(CSIRO)

Division of Entomology

HEADQUARTERS:- Black Mountain, P.O. Box 1700, Canberra City,
A.C.T. 2601.

Chief:- Waterhouse, Dr. D. F.

The Division has a major and expanding programme in biological control of weeds. Units are located at Divisional Headquarters, Canberra, the Long Pocket Laboratories, Brisbane and overseas at Montpellier, France and Curitiba, Brazil.

- (a) Biological Control of Weeds Unit, Canberra - Cullen, Dr. J.M.
Moore, A.D.

Programmes:- Skeleton weed, Chondrilla juncea
Ragwort, Senecio jacobaea
Heliotrope, Heliotropium europeum
Paterson's curse, Echium plantagineum

(b) Biological Control of Weeds Unit. Long Pocket Laboratories,
Meiers Road,
Private Mail Bag No. 3,
Indooroopilly, Brisbane. Q'LD.
4068

Harley, Dr. K.L.S.
Julien, M.H.

Programmes:- Lantana, Lantana camara
Spiny emex, Emex australis; E. spinosa.
Water hyacinth, Eichhornia crassipes
Alligator weed, Alternanthera philoxeroides
Salvinia, Salvinia molesta

2. The Sir Alan Fletcher Research Station of the Queensland State
Department of Lands, P.O. Box 36, Sherwood, Brisbane. QLD. 4075.

Director: Mr. W. Haseler

Research into the control of rangeland and declared noxious
weeds within the state of Queensland is the principal field of study
for this station.

The graduate staff of 9 (total technical staff 21) include 4
entomologists in the biocontrol section. Foreign investigations and
subsequent introduction into Australia of approved species are under-
taken and a new sophisticated quarantine complex to facilitate
investigations of introduced insects under quarantine has recently
been completed.

Weeds on which current biocontrol work is centred are Lantana
camara, Baccharis halimifolia, Eriocereus martinii and Parthenium
hysterophorous. Results of previous biocontrol programmes against
Opuntia spp, Xanthium chinense and Eupatorium adenophorum are also
monitored.

3. Vermin and Noxious Weeds Destruction Board,

Department of Crown Lands and
Survey,
2 Treasury Place,
Melbourne. Vic. 3002

Keith Turnbull Research Institute,
Frankston. Vic. 3199

Amor, Dr. R. L.
Bruzzese, E.
Schmidl, L.

Programmes:- Blackberry, Rubus fruticosus
Ragwort, Senecio jacobaea

Peter Michael, of the University of Sydney and APWSS president is currently studying the genus Echinochloa. After a detailed field survey in the Philippines with Keith Moody and Juan Pancho, Peter has concluded that there are five annual species and one or perhaps two perennial species of Echinochloa in the Philippines. He maintains that two of these are misnamed. E. crus-pavonis is really E. crus-galli ssp. hispidula and E. crus-galli is probably E. glabrescens. The other species occurring in the Philippines are E. oryzoides, E. crus-galli var. austro-japonensis, E. colona and the perennial E. stagnina. A paper describing these findings will be published in an upcoming issue of the Journal of the Weed Science Society of the Philippines (formerly the Philippine Weed Science Bulletin). For information contact WSSP, Bioscience Building, University of the Philippines at Los Banos, College, Laguna, Philippines.

ABSTRACT

"Weed Control in a Fruit Tree Nursery with Herbicide-Impregnated String" by A. S. Hamill, R.E.C. Layne, and F. G. von Stryk, Agriculture Canada, Research Station, Harrow, Ontario, Canada. String impregnated with simazine, atrazine and diuron (6.6%, 2.2% and 2.2% by weight) controlled weeds in rows of 8-month-old peach (Prunus persica (L.) Batsch) and apricot (P. armeniaca L.) seedling nursery stock. A single strand of herbicide-impregnated string controlled all weed growth in a band 30.5 cm wide when placed at the base of the seedlings on the surface of a Fox sandy loam soil. Complete weed control was obtained from the fall of 1973 to the fall of 1974. Placement of the string at various heights above the soil surface gave injury to young leaves which came in constant contact with the string. A wheat bioassay of the nursery soil after seedling removal indicated no phytotoxic residues. Chemical analysis of the string at the end of the experiment showed that 88% of the herbicide was released when one strand of string was placed on the soil surface. This resulted in a concentration of 4.05, 1.35 and 1.35 kg/ha of simazine, atrazine and diuron, respectively, in the treated area. No phytotoxicity from the soil surface string placement was observed on peach or apricot nursery trees. (From HortScience, Vol. 10(6), December 1975, a publication of the American Society for Horticultural Science, Mt. Vernon, VA/USA)

REQUEST

President of IWSS, Les Matthews, in his position as weed control officer with FAO is often called upon to recommend and defend various weed control tactics. He has found the world literature to be sadly lacking in data on the number of hours required to hand weed various crops. If any readers have such information the Secretariat would like to receive it.