

The Self-Sufficiency

Shoppe

Newsletter



Issue 18

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The Lost Art of Weather Prediction

In our modern age we have lost contact with the practical side of Nature and all its wonders. We give little thought to the signs of Nature in relation to the weather. We, instead seat ourselves in front of the television at the right time in the evening to watch the weather forecast. But for cultures past (including as recently as the time of our pioneering ancestors) determining what the weather holds for tomorrow (which was about as far ahead as they could expect to forecast) was a matter of developing the intuitive art or skill of weather prediction – using the signs of Nature as an indicator of the weather to come. This ‘skill’ demanded an affinity with nature in that the forecaster understands Mother Nature, her signs and her moods. It also instilled an appreciation of the vulnerability of humans in the face of the many moods of Mother Nature and the Earth:

Signs from Nature

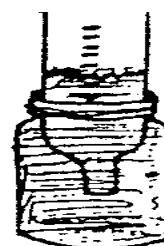
- A bright yellow sunset indicates windy weather is on its way.
- Pale yellow sunset indicates wet weather to come
- A very hot day follows a bright red sunset.
- Dew or fog (the evening before) are indicators of fine weather to come.
- Flowers open wide in great freedom in anticipation of fine weather.
- Spiders remain quiet or spin small restricted webs when rain is likely.
- Cocks crow when rainy weather is about to clear
- Animals’ shelter instead of roaming their usual abodes and pigs in particular will carry straw to their sties when bad weather is expected.
- When rain is due ants are busy carrying food to their nests for storing and building high protective mounds around their nests as a protection from possible floods.

Besides the moods of nature our ancestors had a few other methods for weather prediction:

Water Barometer

Fill a medium size glass jar with water and place a long neck bottle upside-down in the water filled jar. Beginning at the water-line place 10 markings on the bottle 2.5cm apart moving upwards. When rain is due the waterline will rise (caused by changes in environmental air pressure). Each 2.5 cm marking equals 4 millimetres of rain. The level to which the water rises will indicate the amount of rain to be expected.

(cont'd overleaf)



Leech Barometer

Fill a small glass container to one third level with pure water. Add one healthy leech. Cover the container with a piece of linen rag. Change the water in winter once a month. In summer once a fortnight. The following signs foretell the weather:

- (1) If the leech lies motionless in the bottom of the jar the weather will be quiet.
 - (2) The leech will creep to the top of the container if rain is due and will remain in this position until the weather settles.
 - (3) If wind is expected the leech gallops with 'amazing swiftness' with little rest, until the wind begins to blow hard.
 - (4) If a huge storm of thunder and rain is on its way the leech will (for some days before) act uneasy. remain out of the water and at times display violent convulsive motions.
 - (5) In frost and summer weather the leech lies constantly at the bottom of the container.
 - (6) In snow (as with rainy weather) the leech moves to the very top of the container.
- (NB – I found this 'weather prediction technique' in an old 1920 Almanac – I don't know if it actually works - but can't help sympathising with the poor ol' leech! Pam)*

Old-timers 'Never Fail' Method!

Hand a piece of rope in a well cleared high position. If the rope swings - it's windy. If the rope is wet - it's raining . If the rope hangs motionless - the day is still. If the rope throws a shadow – its sunny!

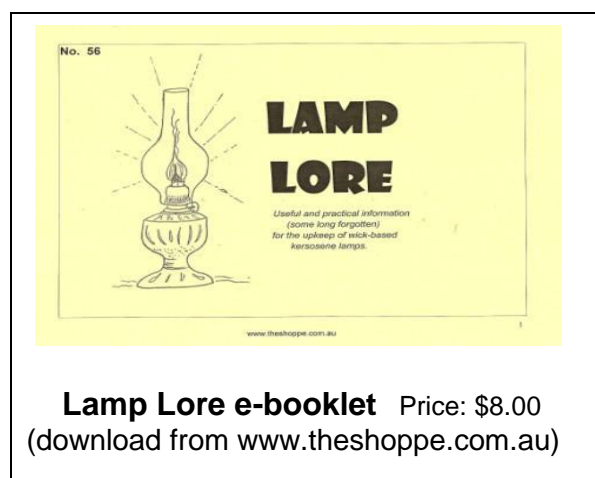


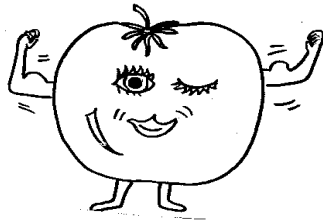
Lamps of the Past

As we progress into the modern age important knowledge or skills that are no longer of use are lost to the past forever. Not so long ago lanterns (oil or kerosene) were a vital part of every household. I grew up in country SA without the advantage of access to the electricity grid. We used a generator and batteries to power household lighting and some electrical appliances. Electricity was used frugally and energy was reserved for essential use only. Kerosene lamps were used as a 'back-up' when the generator failed. Some neighbouring farms did not even have generator-based energy. I can remember staying overnight with neighbouring friends who still used kerosene lamps for lighting and a wood stove for cooking and heating.

Cleaning, repairing and maintaining household lanterns was an important part of the household routine and involved certain knowledge and skills.

Before being lost forever I've put some of this information in a small booklet 'Lamp Lore' (No. 56 in the e-booklet range). If you are a collector of old lamps (like me) then you will appreciate knowing a little about the care of such lamps.





The mighty Tomato!

Its tomato time again. Just one bite of my first home-grown tomato and I'm hooked for the rest of the season! The flavour is wonderful. Its tomatoes on toast for breakfast, tomato and cheese sandwich for lunch and tomato salad for dinner! I stew up the leftovers for bottling (using recycled jars) to last for the remainder of the year. I've just made a batch of homemade pasta sauce with tomatoes, capsicum, onions, garlic, herbs and a dash of sweet sherry for flavour for

pasta dishes, pizza's etc. I recently had the 'privilege' of tasting commercial pasta sauce and just couldn't believe the difference in flavour. I'll take the homemade anytime.

Here's two useful e-booklets: 'Ways With Tomatoes' `(\$12.00) and No. 46 'Preserving Without a Preserving Outfit' (using recycled jars) \$8.00. 'Ways With Tomatoes' in particular contains information about not only culinary uses for tomatoes but health and personal care uses, skin-care, growing tips, ways to store tomatoes and some interesting general hints and tips.



Healthy dash of sauce

FIONA MACRAE
LONDON

A DASH of tomato sauce three times a day can help cut cholesterol, research shows.

The sauce helps lower the level of LDL or "bad" cholesterol which clogs the arteries, increasing the risk of heart attacks and strokes.

A group of 21 men and women who added 30g, or six teaspoons, of sauce to their daily diet as well as two glasses of tomato juice had a significant drop in their cholesterol levels in just three weeks.

The level of LDL plummeted by 13 per cent, while overall levels of cholesterol fell by 6 per cent.

For the same effect with sauce alone, 18 teaspoons would need to be eaten each day.

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Tomato Sauce Lowers Cholesterol

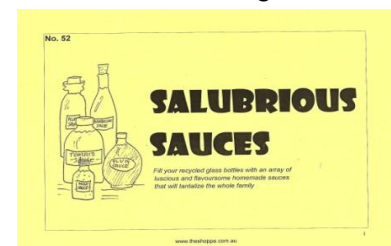
Lovers of tomato sauce will be pleased to hear that eating tomato sauce will lower cholesterol. Even better – make your own homemade tomato sauce from your home grown tomatoes for a great flavour sensation! Here's the recipe:

Homemade Tomato Sauce

3 kilogram ripe tomatoes, 500g apples, 500g onions, 2 teaspoons each of salt, whole cloves and ground ginger.

Method: Grate apples. Chop onions and cut tomatoes into wedges. Place in pan with spices & salt. Boil 3 hours. Put through sieve or strainer to remove skins, seeds, etc. Pour pulp back into pan, add 2 cups white vinegar and 350g sugar. Boil until thick (test by placing one teaspoonful of sauce on saucer when vinegar does not appear at the edge of the mixture the sauce is of the correct consistency). Pour into clean sterile bottles for storage.

From e-booklet No. 52 - Salubrious Sauces – also contains recipes for pasta sauce, Worcestershire sauce, chilli sauce, black bean sauce, plum sauce, mint sauce, barbeque sauce and more. **Price: \$8.00**
(See page 4 for download information)



Handy Hint: A combination of tomato, Worcestershire and barbeque sauces makes a very flavoursome and quick 'gourmet' sauce.

Cancer from lipstick

CHEMICALS in lipstick and nail varnish may trigger breast cancer, scientists warned yesterday.

A study has shown that butyl benzyl phthalate, or BBP, can interfere with the healthy development of breast tissue.

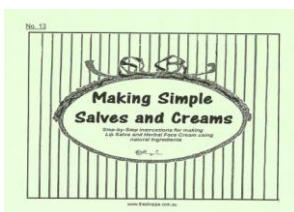
Environmental campaigners yesterday called for it to be banned in the cosmetics industry, where it is used to make products glossy.

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Homemade Lipstick

In Issue No. 12 of The Shoppe Newsletter I wrote about the dangers of lead in lipstick and offered some alternatives including a recipe for making lipstick (safe and naturally). In one of my recent workshops the group made a simple beeswax-olive oil lip cream and blended in some red food colouring to make a red-coloured 'lip gloss'. It worked very well and all were quite pleased with what we had created! It was not as slick or glossy as the commercial counterpart but was still effective. e-Booklets No. 4 'Making Beeswax Products' and No. 13 'Making Salves & Creams' have info on making lip salves and coloured lip-stick.



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How to Purchase Booklets and Workshop@Home

There are 3 ways to purchase publications:

Method 1. From the website:

All booklets are available for immediate download. This is the quickest way to access the booklets.

1. Go to www.theshoppe.com.au
2. Click on 'Shoppe Publications'
3. Scroll down to find your chosen title
4. Click 'ADD TO CART'
5. Click 'Continue shopping with The Shoppe' to order more booklets or
6. Follow the prompts: 'Proceed to Check-out' to pay. (You do not need to have a Paypal account to order via this method. You can pay by debit or credit card, Mastercard, Visa, American Express or Paypal)
7. When payment has been processed your booklet will appear immediately for download in PDF (Acrobat) format on the screen.
8. Save to your computer for printing (full booklet or just relevant recipe pages) or use ebook reader.

Method 2. Internet Banking or Direct Payment:

Electronic funds transfer into The Self-Sufficiency Shoppe account. Booklets can then be emailed or posted* to you. Email: pam@theshoppe.com.au for The Shoppe's bank account details for payment transfer. *Please add \$3 to the price of each booklet to cover printing and postage costs.

Method 3. By Mail

Send cheque/money order to The Self-Sufficiency Shoppe - P.O. Box 390, Park Holme, 5043 (add \$2 per booklet for printing & postage). Your booklets will be downloaded and printed for you and sent to your address. Please add \$3 per booklet for postage and printing costs.

If you have any problems or queries contact: pam@theshoppe.com.au