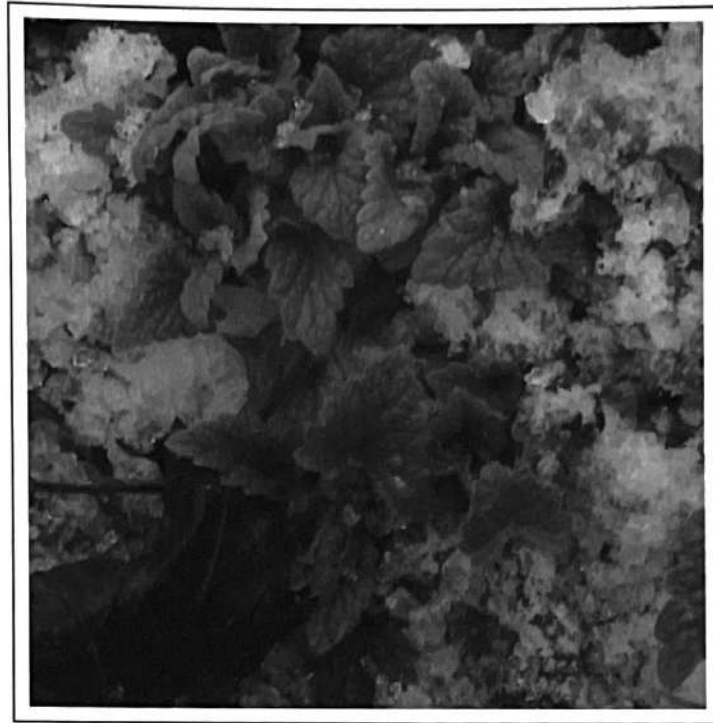


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**Miracles of Homa Herb Garden**

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Vasant V. Paranjpe

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**Cover**

This thriving catnip plant is just one example of Homa's effect in the garden.







# Miracles of Homa Herb Garden

In 1975 a small herb garden was started at the Agnihotra Press Farm by Mike Billian. A year later when I came to work at the press we expanded the garden. In one area we now have approximately 40 different varieties of herbs growing. The majority of these plants are medicinal, although we did include many culinary and aromatic herbs as well as a few herbacious perennials just for show. Our herb garden is located about 20 feet from the Yajnya room where a Yajnya (Homa) fire is maintained 24 hours a day. We started this Yajnya on September 9, 1978. We have had this Yajnya going for over 3 years now and one can really see the benefits.

"When a plant remains in an atmosphere where Yajnya is performed regularly the whole structure of the plant is strengthened and thrives. For instance by doing this *Om Tryambakam* Homa for one week the atmosphere is so much filled with ghee. A plant will reach for the nutrient. The more nutrient it can extract from the atmosphere, thereby becoming healthier, stronger and because of the atmosphere being purer, the plant itself becomes more homogenous with its surroundings and hence more nutritional. The amount of moisture a plant can retain increases. The taste, texture, color, nutritional quality of the plant improves, all from growing in Yajnya atmosphere."

*Homa Therapy Farming Bulletin #1 published by Agnihotra University.*

As everybody knows this has been one of the worst winters we've ever had. I've never seen so much snow in Baltimore. The temperature dropped to record lows and for a period of about two weeks, it snowed every few days. Heavy rain froze on top of the snow, encasing everything in a crystalline glaze.

One day last week I came to do Yajnya and was about 1/2 hour early; so I took a walk around the grounds to check on the garden. The weather was not as severe as it had been and most of the snow had already begun to disappear. When growing perennial plants it is best to pile dried leaves and other organic substances on them to protect them from severe weather. This practice is called mulching. I was concerned that some of the plants might not survive all the snow, as I did not mulch the garden as heavily as I usually do in the fall.

Shepherd's Purse and Chamomile  
My fears were unwarranted. I was shocked to see so much activity going on in the beginning of the month of February! There was a huge quantity of Shepherd's Purse coming up in one of the beds. It was totally exposed to the elements and was just as green as you please. I looked further and found Chamomile growing under the mat of Shepherd's Purse. This really surprised me as the Chamomile did not come

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up until very late in the season last year and was not as plentiful as it had been in years past. In truth I did not expect any of it to come up this year at all.

#### Rosemary

I then checked the Rosemary. Every year previous to this one we had lost all of our Rosemary to the cold. The very tips of the plant were brown but for the most part it was quite green. Again I was delightfully surprised. Rosemary is a tender perennial and prefers to winter over in a greenhouse.

#### Thyme

Moving to another part of the garden, I checked the Thyme bed. We have planted as many different varieties of Thyme as we could get. Spaced close together, the low growing plants formed a thick carpet of many beautiful colors, golden yellow, silver white and several different shades of green leaves covered with red, pink, purple and white flowers. *I noticed that in spite of heavy winter and snow many of the plants were full and bushy with a lot of new growth. This was a miracle happening due to Yajnya.* Usually most of the leaves of the Thyme plants drop off during the winter months leaving only the bare woody stems exposed. This was not the case!

"Elements begin to change. Somehow due to a magnetlike pull set up where Yajnya is performed the elements required to make certain life sustaining essentials are again attracted to the planet by manifestation of some other mode of transference. Some may even come from other planets."

*Homa Therapy Farming Bulletin #7 published by Agnihotra University.*

#### Flowers

Last year we planted snapdragons as well as other annual flowers next to the entrance to the Yajnya room. An annual is a plant that lives only for one growing season and usually dies down in the fall. I noticed that our snapdragons kept on growing long after all of the other flowers had turned brown but they continued to bloom and produce new flowers 'til around Christmas time. *This was contrary to anything I have seen in the past.*

I checked the same flower bed and found that a pansy was still green and growing. A pansy is a biennial plant. A biennial is a plant that grows for two seasons—dying down at the end of summer, returning again in the spring. *It's unheard of for this species to stay green through the entire winter.* Thanks again to Yajnya atmosphere.

### Catnip

As I was walking through the garden utterly amazed and excited at what I was finding, I noticed Mitzi, the press cat, digging at something in one of the beds. I walked over to see what she was up to. *I found unbelievable quantities of catnip growing all over the place. Not only was it growing where I had planted it originally, but it had reseeded itself and was coming up in at least 7 different locations. Nowhere else that I know of do plants of this type grow in the dead of winter.*

We have had a lot of unusual things happen to the plants in recent years. I suppose we find it even more surprising as we did not really have any knowledge or practical experience in gardening when we started out. I did not have much experience in growing herbs. Apparently this was not a factor in the success of the garden. Our yields have been tremendous.

Last year we could not keep up with the Comfrey. We kept cutting it back almost to the ground and it would rise again, a fountain of huge green leaves decorated with beautiful bell-shaped blossoms. The bees were especially fond of it.

I found many valuable herbs growing in the woods that surround the farm. Bee Balm, Wild Ginger, Bloodroot, Indian Turnips, and to my

great surprise Black Cohosh. I had spent some time trying to locate certain herbs through various nurseries. Cohosh was one that I looked for over a year and when I did finally buy some it cost me over five dollars for one plant. I found later on that here it was growing wild almost in our backyard.

Herbs are classified as plants that have fleshy stems that die during the winter and return again in the spring, getting larger and more beautiful with each reappearance. Many herbs have exquisite flowers. Some are even grown for their ornamental blossoms in flower gardens. But these usually hardy plants are most treasured for the individual medicinal properties that they contain. For many years plants have been the mainstay of folk medicine with remedies being passed down for generations.

"Plants, minerals, water, soils, metals, etc., have a special function principle which they follow. According to that they absorb the 'spiritual' energy and direct it into special functions. Man consists of various functions. When one special function is disturbed or weakened he can take a special part out of nature's kingdom





which is totally restricted to this function and is concentrated in that. He can thus let it work its influence on his body 'til that special function of the body is strengthened and recovered."

*Satsang Volume 9 no. 6*

An herb garden can be a very special place, so many colors and such a variety of shapes and sizes of foliage. During the full moon in the month of June the garden is at its peak. Everyone is attracted to it. The children especially like to walk through and taste the different varieties of mints and to smell so many wonderful smells. Some of the plants possess such strong volatile oils that a breeze will send the scent to you from several feet away.

Herbs are easy to grow. Many of them will grow in the poorest of soils. Their leaves contain volatile oils which are natural insect repellents. For this reason many herbs are valuable when used as companions to vegetable plants.

Companion relationships were first studied in depth by Rudolph Steiner who is well-known as the father of Biodynamic farming. He found that by planting herbs throughout his garden, the vegetables produced higher quality fruit. The herbs produced volatile oils that protected many of the vegetables from insect infestation. These oils can also add flavor to more bland tasting vegetables such as squash. Interplanting compatible plants will improve growth as the various plants feed and protect each other.

We dry parts of our plants for use as medicinal teas, spicing and some for cosmetic purposes. Herbs are so versatile. It all depends on what you want to do with your crop. Medicinal herbs can be dried and sold to health food stores or made into herbal blends, teas or smoking mixtures for your personal use. Culinary herbs make a nice addition to daily meals and can often be sold to local restaurants. Aromatics can be used for cooking and also for making sachets, pomanders and bath bags. A large variety of herbal crafts and products are easy to make. Pressed leaves and flowers can be used to make pictures. Herbs can be combined with other ingredients to make condiments.





*Joni Flitt*

Currently the following herbs are being grown at the Agnihotra Press Farm:

Angelica	Comfrey
Baby's Breath—3 varieties	Feverfew
Balsam	Ginger—Wild
Basil—2 varieties	Horehound
Bee Balm	Hyssop
Bergamot	Lavender
Bloodroot	Lemon Balm
Burnet	Lovage
Calendula	Lupine
Catnip	Marigold
Chamomile	Marjoram
Chives	Mint—3 varieties
Cohosh—Black	Motherwort
Columbine	Mullein



*Mike Billian*

Raspberry	Southernwood
Rosemary	Summer Savory
Rue	Tansy
Sage	Tarragon
Sanicle	Thyme—5 varieties
Santolina	Woodruff
Shepherd's Purse	Woolly Betony
Skirr	Yarrow
Solomon's Seal	

When famine is spreading all over the planet due to soil spoilage by chemical fertilizers and insecticides and acid rains due to air pollution it is a delightful contrast to know how one can grow large crops in a small area by following Homa Therapy Methods based on knowledge of biorhythms, subtle energies, pyramid power and vibrations and structure of planet Earth.

Joni Flitt  
Baltimore