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The Bonsai Society meets at the Bellerive Community Art Centre,
17 Cambridge Rd, Bellerive at 7:30 pm on the third Tuesday of the month
(February – November)

Website: www.key.org.au/bonsai

Newsletter No 201 – November 2009

Meeting Commenced: President Noel welcomed everyone and declared the meeting open at 7:45pm. There were 16 members present, and we also welcomed Jordyn Long and Japheth Thomson.

(A committee meeting was not held due to members setting up our display for the Royal Hobart Show.)

On the subject of the public liability insurance Treasurer, Stuart Clutterbuck advised we accept an offer to join the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria and be covered by theirs.

The Treasurer also commented that some members have still not renewed their membership for 2009/2010. As we are a small organization we don't like to lose any members so, those of you who have not yet done so, payments can be forwarded to the address at the top of the newsletter.

Members were informed that we have a permit valid for one year, so for those who would still like to avail themselves of digging Radiata pine and Macrocarpus at Seven Mile Beach, please let the secretary know and your details can be added to the permit.

Hobart Horticultural Society: 6th & 7th November – Rose, Iris & Floral Art Show (Hobart Town Hall) - members were reminded to bring their display plants on the evening of the 5th November.

Christmas get together: After some discussion, it was decided to have a barbecue at Island Bonsai (Will Fletcher agreed) on Saturday 5th December. Pre-lunch drinks from 12.00 noon. (This will be in lieu of a Christmas party at the Art Centre.) Sausages and hamburgers will be supplied, and perhaps members would like to contribute a salad and/or dessert, and BYO drinks – beer, wine or soft drinks. There will be a lucky door prize, and don't forget your decorated bonsai! It could win you something too. (In case anyone has forgotten, Island Bonsai is at 37 Hall Street, Ridgeway.)

January Meeting: This will take the form of a BYO barbecue to be held on Sunday 17th January 2010, at the home of Ambrose Canning whose address is "Lanesend", 33 Lipscombe Avenue, Sandy Bay. (Ambrose describes it as "the old weatherboard farm house, behind the long hedge, beside the huge Deodar or Himalayan Cedar.") Ambrose assures us he has a good size barbecue to cater for hearty appetites! Commencing at 12 noon. (Tel.: 6225 4002 – in case anyone gets lost.)

Outings: Will Fletcher has offered to co-ordinate/organize excursions to Mt. Wellington and Mt Field. More information will be provided in the New Year.

Inwards Correspondence: Various newsletters from Interstate Clubs

Next Meeting: Will be held on the 17th November. Ambrose Canning will be demonstrating and discussing “Aerial Layering”. (See page 3 for further information on his presentation.)

Display Table: An interesting selection spilled across the display table – Noel had several *Macrocarpa* including one wrapped around driftwood; a Maple in the root over rock style and a *Cotoneaster*. Gill presented her trident Maple group, together with a Fuchsia and Japanese Maple. Ambrose brought in a Mugo Pine; Eva’s *Choisya* was in bloom; Will showed what can be done with *Hibbertia* (Guinea Flower); Ona’s Chinese *Wisteria* drew admiration for its array of beautiful flowers; and Jordyn opted to display *Leptospermum* (Tea Tree).

Raffle: A plant donated by Gill was won by Helene, and some copper wire (again donated by Gill) which Eva was very happy with.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm after which Will Fletcher discussed and demonstrated pruning/repotting of native plants as bonsai material. It seemed some members were a little uncertain of the plants’ recovery rate after witnessing his severe handiwork!

Will pointed out that he hasn’t had any problems with mid-Summer branch and root pruning prior to repotting. He advises the removal of all new growth – foliage and roots- at the same time, after which the plant stalls. It is important to place the plant in a shaded, sheltered position – not in the hot sun – for a period after this work has been done, to allow recovery. If the process is carried out during Winter, it’s not necessary to take so much off because the plant is fairly dormant at that time of year.

The three plants he brought along for the demonstration were *Hakea*, *Acacia riceana* (Rice’s Wattle) and our own *Nothofagus*. He removed all new growth (including flowers from the *Hakea*) a substantial amount of foliage and branching, and a lot of the roots. After repotting all plants will be placed in the shade house.

He also mentioned that he’d had about a 50% success rate growing *Nothofagus* from new growth cuttings, but warned that they should be allowed to harden off for about two months before taking cuttings.

Seaweed fertilizer and Osmocote plant food for natives are both good to use.

Members will be very keen to see the results of this drastic work when we celebrate our Christmas get together at Island Bonsai!

A report on the Royal Hobart Show: Thank you to members who took the opportunity of displaying their bonsai, and a big thank you to our hard working committee who arranged it. We had quite a variation including conifers, pines, maples, flowering azaleas, various elms, a beautiful oak, and a selection of natives which also attracted some interest. For those who were unable to visit the stand, it was really lovely, with many visitors congratulating and thanking us for the beautiful display. It’s very rewarding to be able to say it is the work of members of our Society. Of course there were the usual comments, such as “I had one of those, but it died” and “I’d love to own one, but I’m not very artistic”.

We had enquiries from quite a number of young people who expressed a keen interest in bonsai, and the usual question: “Are they for sale?” Our agreement with the organizers does not permit us to sell from the stand. However, if those members who displayed their plants were interested in selling, would they be prepared for their contact details to be given to someone keen on buying, and to nominate an acceptable price for the chosen plant? Obviously, it would be made clear to the buyer they would not be able to purchase it at the show. Members’ thoughts on this would be welcome.

Another issue surfaced – that of attracting new members to our Society. We handed out quite a number of leaflets which provide the recipient with details of our meeting times, just as we did last year. It is obvious from speaking to visitors, that some are serious bonsai enthusiasts, yet they haven’t made themselves known to the Society. New members offer the opportunity of new or different ideas and experiences – for us, and for themselves.

Editors note: Hopefully our Society’s details will appear in the *Mercury’s* “Diary” a week before our next meeting i.e. 9th or 10th November.

Aerial Layering – Ambrose Canning

The two small trees I propose to use to demonstrate are a variegated maple and a viburnum.

The maple has a long slender trunk that has some reverse taper near the bottom, and it has no significant surface roots. I want to reduce the trunk height, remove the reverse taper bottom part, and develop some surface roots.

The viburnum was obtained from a garden plant and is still only small and a potential bonsai. I have only ever seen one viburnum bonsai as a photo on the cover of an old *Bonsai Today* magazine. The plant I have has two opposing roots that are not attractive or suitable, and no other surface roots. I aim to layer this to produce better surface roots. It is already showing a marked reduction in leaf size.

I also have two examples I will bring along of past layerings, done in summer 2008. One is a very small Yew which was only reduced in height by about 1 cm by layering the main trunk, primarily to remove inadequate roots and produce good new surface roots. The other is a medium sized *Parrotia persica* (Persian Witch Hazel) which was growing with a near horizontal trunk and which was layered to turn its trunk upright and at the same time produce multiple surface roots.



Fig. 38 Layering: Aerial layer.

(a) Cut through bark with scalpel. (b) Remove flap. (c) Dust with hormone. (d) Wrap with wet sphagnum moss. (e) Wrap with polythene and, when root tips show, puncture the polythene to prevent rot. (f) Gently remove moss. (g) The layer is potted in a deep container with the roots spread radially.

(Editor: Diagrams above are from “The Art of Bonsai” by Peter Adams, while the following is an extract from an article on aerial layering courtesy of the Canberra Bonsai Society’s website. Aerial layering is the method by which it is possible to create a more substantial trunk, and has the advantage of retaining all the adult characteristics of the tree. It is used to form roots at a certain point on the plant, either on the main trunk or a branch. In using this method, you are relying on the ability of the cambium to produce new cells. The cells usually develop into xylem (wood) cells on the inside of the cambium and phloem (bark) cells on the outside. They can, however, be induced to form new roots. The technique involves interrupting the downward flow of sap through the bark. Callus tissue forms at the point where the flow is blocked, and roots grow out of this callus tissue.

Advantages include the following:

- Able to get sizeable tree in short time
- Genetically identical to parent tree
- Can be used to produce identical plants for group plantings
- High success rate
- Quite thickish branches can be encouraged to root
- Species difficult to root from cuttings can usually be rooted by aerial layering
- Usually produces a good spread of radial roots
- Training can be commenced while waiting for roots to grow
- Can be used to shorten leggy trunks

Wisteria- Many of us will be watching our wisteria closely to identify flower buds. The note that follows was used by one of our past members, Kerry Anderson. Kerry's bonsai wisteria were, amongst his other bonsai, magnificent.

The best time to prune wisteria is directly after flowering, cut back and shape then leave till autumn for further pruning. Allow the plant to grow during summer, this helps to thicken the trunk. Use normal fertilizer and sulphate of potash fortnightly in alternation. Feed regularly over growing period.

Wisteria is a very vigorous grower and should be re potted annually once it loses its leaves.



Chinese Wisteria

Wisteria sinensis

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
(Redirected from Chinese Wisteria)

Wisteria sinensis (Chinese Wisteria) is a woody, deciduous, perennial climbing vine in the genus *Wisteria*, native to China. The flowers are white, violet, or blue, produced on 15-20 cm racemes in spring. Though it has shorter racemes than *Wisteria floribunda* (Japanese Wisteria), it often has a higher quantity of racemes.

It prefers moist soils, is considered shade tolerant, but will flower only when exposed to partial or full sun. It will also flower only after passing from juvenile to adult stage, a transition that may take many years. It can live for over 100 years.

It was introduced from China to Europe and North America in 1816 and has secured a place as one of the most popular flowering vines for home gardens due to its flowering habit.

Wisteria floribunda

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
Japanese Wisteria

Binomial name

Wisteria floribunda

Japanese wisteria (*Wisteria floribunda*) is a woody liana of the *Wisteria* family. It was brought from Japan to the United States in 1860 by George Rogers Hall. Since then, it has become one of the most highly romanticised flowering garden plants. It is also a common subject for bonsai, along with *Wisteria sinensis* (Chinese wisteria). The flowering habit of Japanese wisteria is perhaps the most spectacular of the *Wisteria* family. It sports the longest flower racemes of any wisteria; they can reach nearly half a meter in length. These racemes burst into great trails of clustered white, violet, or blue flowers in early- to mid-spring. The flowers carry a distinctive fragrance similar to that of grapes. The early flowering time of Japanese wisteria can cause problems in temperate climates, where early frosts can destroy the coming years' flowers. It will also flower only after passing from juvenile to adult stage, a transition that may take many frustrating years just like its cousin Chinese Wisteria.

The foliage consists of shiny, dark-green, pinnately compound leaves 10-30cm in length. The leaves bear 9-13 oblong leaflets that are each 2-6 cm long. It also bears numerous poisonous, brown, velvety, bean-like seed pods 5-10cm long that mature in summer and persist until winter. Japanese wisteria prefers moist soils and full sun. The plant often lives over fifty years.



Japanese Wisteria