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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.chooseit.org.au/bonsai

Newsletter No 215 – March 2011

This month's meeting is Tuesday, 15th March at 7.30pm and the focus of the meeting will be on cotoneasters and ivy, regarded as easy plants to train in various bonsai styles. Gill Roberts will be our presenter and members are welcome to "have a go" on the night. It might be interesting for those who have some already in training, to bring them for the display table.

Our February meeting was attended by 12 members with apologies from 4. Two visitors Bob White (a past member), and Zoe Lowe (who has now joined the Society) were also welcomed by President, Noel Kemp, who opened the meeting at 7.45pm

Since our last meeting (November) several newsletters arrived from interstate clubs and societies. These often have very interesting articles and are recommended reading. Copies are stored in our library collection which is available to members.

Members were asked for their input regarding topics/suggestions for future meetings or workshops. Your Committee tries to ensure that any information they impart is useful, relevant and interesting for all members. So if you have problems with wiring (and would like to avoid strangling your plants!), or have questions with a specific species/style etc. speak to a committee member about having it discussed. If you prefer, email or post it to the editor who will put it into the newsletter (anonymously) for a response. Someone else may be having the same problem. Some dates and details for your calendar appear on page 2.

Members were reminded of the change of venue for the up-coming Dahlia, Gladioli & Floral Art Show which is being held on March 11-12th at the Hobart City Hall this year (due to a mix-up in bookings).

The 8th National Exhibition of Australian Native Plants as Bonsai will be held in Canberra on the 19th and 20th March, 2011, and will include a symposium aimed at promoting discussion "amongst Australian bonsai artists and explore new approaches to styling Australian plants that reflect their natural growth forms." Member Will Fletcher will be presenting a paper on native Tea Trees, which will appear in a later newsletter. He will provide the April meeting with a report on the symposium. As there are members who have begun to explore the use of native species as bonsai, Will's report should prove very interesting.

Editor's note:

I was fortunate to visit the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection during a very brief visit to Canberra recently, and had the opportunity of meeting with Grant Bowie, curator of the collection, together with Ruth McLucas, President of the Canberra Bonsai Society, and a few of their members. Arnold and I had a very enjoyable morning, and can recommend a visit for those who have not yet had the opportunity. Photos of some of the collection will appear in our monthly newsletters (see page3).

Dig: We are proposing a trip to the Geeveston area with the idea of collecting natives for future bonsai. Saturday, 16th April has been nominated, and it might be worth thinking about travelling in groups thereby reducing the number of vehicles (and our carbon footprint). If there is anyone who would like to come, but is unable to make the meeting on 15th March, could they please contact me (Tel. at top of newsletter) so we get an idea of numbers.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 19th April which **will include a report on the National Exhibition in Canberra.**

Bonsai Calendar Updates:

May 17th Meeting – creating bonsai using Australian natives.

June 21st Meeting – Ambrose to demonstrate pruning on deciduous trees – which can then be followed through at the workshop on the 25th June.

July 19th Meeting – the AGM, which will be followed by a report on the WA AABC conference.

August 16th Meeting – Wiring methods and how not to strangle our plants!

September 20th Meeting – Root-over-rock and raft styles presented by Stuart Clutterbuck

October 18th Meeting – Cascade and formal upright styles

Workshop: Saturday 30th April at Island Bonsai

Reminders:

Chrysanthemum & Floral Art Show being held from April 29th to May 1st, at the Hobart Town Hall.

Members interested in purchasing 5kg bags of Debco Mix for re-potting their bonsai, could they please see Gill Roberts for details of price and availability.

Answers to Members' Questions:

How much new growth should be pruned off deciduous trees in summer? Does it depend on the style you are aiming for, or are there different guidelines for different species?

I would say anything from nothing to everything. I know that pruning and defoliating are not the same thing, but I have completely defoliated deciduous trees in summer (e.g. Japanese maples). I believe that summer is a good time to prune, but it is harder to see what needs to be done because of leaves. About a month ago I heavily pruned my flowering dogwood (that has never flowered, yet) because it was getting leggy and out of control. I pruned it back hard reducing its branch length and its height by about at least a half. It ended up with no leaves left and looking like a bunch of sticks, but now it has plenty of new shoots and plenty of leaves appearing. Soon I will start pinching unwanted ones off. I think that during developing a style or rejuvenating a bonsai we should not be afraid to prune back further and heavier than we often do. Some deciduous trees, also conifers such as Yews, can be pruned back to a stump to allow a brand new start.

How often should you spray moss in the warmer weather, or should it be left to die (which is what happens) and allow it to come back next winter? Presumably this is dependent on where you live and where the plants are situated.

I think it also depends on the type of moss one has. During summer I am watering every day, every morning, and I have moss that remains green and moist all summer. But I have noted some other moss I collected does tend to dry out, even although it is under shade cloth so out of direct sun during warmer summer months. It could probably benefit from misting a couple of times a day. I have seen moss in very dry areas of the TAS east coast, I have seen it beside Hobart streets, in alpine areas and in rain forest. All quite different habitats, with quite different amount of water available. I collect different mosses and experiment with them, and some are better than others.

Birthday Greetings to members celebrating in March. Your birthstones are aquamarine or bloodstone.

Recipe: **Gill's Apple Cake**

Ingredients - 125gm (¼lb) butter 1½ cups S.R Flour
 1 cup sugar Pinch salt
 1 egg Vanilla essence

Method - Cream butter and sugar. Add egg and essence, beat. Add sifted flour and salt into a stiff mixture. Press into two sponge cake tins including up the sides of each tin.
Cook at 180°C (350°F) for 15-20 minutes. Cool in tins before placing onto cooling rack. Can be kept in a container until needed.
Use a large tin of Ardmona Pie Apple, put into base generously. Put whipped cream on top and sprinkle with Cinnamon.
Note: It is better if done for at least one hour before required.



Taxodium Group Courtesy of National Bonsai & Penjing Collection, Canberra