



President: Noel Kemp
☎ (03) 6243 6296

Secretary: Evelyn Black
12 Clearwater Court
Blackmans Bay, TAS 7052
☎ (03) 6229 5741
E-mail: e.black@bigpond.com

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 218 – June 2011

This month's Meeting is on Tuesday, 21st June commencing at 7.30pm and Ambrose Canning will be our demonstrator (see page 3 for information on his forthcoming presentation).

President Noel Kemp opened the May meeting at 7.47, welcoming 17 members and two visitors, Chris Willing and Voitek Biskup, who we look forward to seeing at future meetings. There were 2 apologies – Helene Browne and Zoe Lowe who were unable to join us.

Members were informed that our Society is now a member of the Australian Association of Bonsai Clubs (AABC), through which we hope to participate in their Visiting Tutor program. The Committee will discuss options at its next meeting.

A letter was received from the Hobart Horticultural Society thanking us for our support at their Floral Shows during the 2010/2011 season. They have also asked if we can provide an information officer to be in attendance during the shows, and there is the possibility of holding a workshop on the Saturday. This will also be discussed at our next Committee meeting. Society badges are available for those who don't have one – cost is \$5 per badge.

Workshop: Our next workshop is on Saturday 25th June at Island Bonsai commencing between 12.30-1.00pm. With a reminder that we can work on our deciduous trees at this time of year. (Workshop held on the 22nd of May was attended by 11 members. Helene and Herbert had plants for sale, and Noel's collection of pots were available for purchase.)

Next Meeting: Tuesday 19th July at Bellerive Community Arts Centre will be our AGM, for which members are asked to nominate candidates for the Committee. The Vice Presidency is being vacated by long-serving member, Herbert Harding, who feels it's time for someone younger to take up the position. although Herbert is still willing to serve as a committee member. Thank you Herbert, for your input into our Committee meetings – always with a touch of humour! And a reminder everyone – membership renewal is due. Forms for both are attached to this month's newsletter.

Birthday Greetings to members celebrating in June, your birthstones are Agate, Pearl, Moonstone or Alexandrite

Raffle: A lazy susan donated by the Society, won by Ambrose, and a pot donated by Herbert which was won by Evelyn.

Display Table: Ambrose brought in a Cedar which he will repot round September when he plans to cut a lot of the roots. Branches were wired, but sprang back up once the wire was removed.

Diana brought a Callistemon to get some advice about shaping.

Noel showed us a Monterey cypress in a windswept style and a maple in its autumn colour.

Noel also had his little Macrocarpa group which were planted in various potting mediums last October, some of which have grown better than others. Noel uses a fertilizer called Ficote which, in his opinion, has been very effective.

A reminder to members who have yet to pick up or pay for their Debco potting mix – Gill will bring it to the meeting and workshop.

Meeting closed at 8.15pm after which Will Fletcher discussed the use of Tasmanian natives as bonsai subjects, in particular *Leptospermum*, or as it may be better known, Native Tea Tree. Will's subject was a *Leptospermum nitidum*, or Shiny Tea Tree, described in *Native Trees of Tasmania* by J B Kirkpatrick & Sue Backhouse "as a small shrub common to button grass plains in the west of Tasmania, but also dominates scrub, and forest with a rain-forest understorey. It occurs on some of the poorest soils in the state and extends from sea level into the alpine zone. It is confined to areas with high rainfall." The following observations (from Will's own discussion paper) provide his reasons for the use of *Leptospermum* varieties in bonsai culture:-

1. Bark - very striking, even on relatively young trees. Often flaky, papery or fibrous
2. Trunk – often develops over time with a ropey appearance (muscles!) Very striking
3. Generally adapt well to pot culture
 - reliable as a potted plant
 - branches wire well when young (thus being adaptable to many styles)
 - will often shoot back from older wood
 - usually healthy (but watch out for scale and the ensuing sooty mould)
4. Small leaves, flowers and fruit (as a woody capsule), so nicely in scale for bonsai
5. Can develop an aged look, when relatively young (courtesy of bark and trunk)
6. Flowers are very showy (and are now available in a myriad of designer colours)
7. The woody seed capsules can also be very ornamental

His specimen was about 12 years old, and had been in its "nursery" pot for some time. The bonsai pot chosen as its new "home" was one of Pat Kennedy's – shallow, rough textured and well suited for its occupant. After some pruning and root trimming, the tree was wired into place, its roots placed directly onto the base of the pot – something Will has found doesn't seem to be a problem. We look forward to observing its progress in due course.



(Photos courtesy of Phil Dilger – mobile phones can come in handy sometimes!)

Ambrose has supplied the following information for his demonstration:

At the Society's June meeting I have been nominated to present a demonstration "pruning deciduous trees". Although I can and will talk a little about pruning of deciduous trees, it is a difficult time of year because I don't do much or any deciduous tree pruning at this time. However, some major styling or restyling can be done, and there are some things I can do and talk about. I have put together this introduction as a tempter to get members enthused before the meeting.

I will be bringing along three pre-bonsai, meaning that they are potential future bonsai trees but at the moment are in early stages of training and in common garden pots. They are:

- Winter Sweet (*Chimonanthus praecox*), a deciduous shrub from China, flowers in winter
- Sassafras (*Atherosperma moschatum*), a Tasmanian native tree
- Red Barked Dogwood (*Cornus alba*), a deciduous shrub from northern Europe and Asia
- Variegated Maple (*Acer* -----)

The Maple you may remember from a Society meeting back in late 2009, and described in Newsletter 202. I started an aerial layering of it with the aim of reducing its trunk length, removing a bend and bulge, and developing good surface roots. It should have been ready for separation by the following winter 2010, after one growing season. Why wasn't it? What rework did I have to do? How can I tell it is now OK? All will be revealed at the next meeting. Finally I will be able to separate the layered top and prune away its old lower trunk and old root system. Come along to see the results.

I also worked on a *Viburnum* at the same 2009 meeting. What happened to it and why haven't I brought it back as well?

The Red Barked Dogwood I worked on at the July 2010 meeting. It is the one I tried a new (to me) technique of planting multiple rooted cuttings through holes drilled in an aluminium plate. A similar method was in the *Bonsai Today* magazine issue 8 from many years ago. The reason is to get the trunks to swell and produce roots above the holes, and possibly even fuse together. Then the trunks and roots below the plate are cut off and the plate removed. The result is a multi-trunked tree with wide trunk base and great surface roots. Has it worked for me? Even I don't know yet, although the group has grown strongly during last summer. At the meeting I will prune it top and bottom, and remove excess soil to see how the experiment has performed.

At the same July 2010 meeting I did a similar thing with a group of *Viburnum plicatum* cuttings. I won't be bringing them along to this meeting and I will tell you why.

The Winter Sweet was a stunted little plant I dug up out of our garden, it was neglected and suffering in dry hard clay. It had a thin trunk with a large bulge on top, a bit of a club like appearance, and no good surface roots. To try and rectify or remove these faults I have performed an aerial layering. It is now ready to separate (come and see how I know) and prune off the old trunk and root system. I wonder how it will now look? I am aiming for a small bonsai, multi trunked, that I can bring inside to admire its late winter flowers.

Finally the Sassafras, one of my Tasmanian natives. It has been sitting in a black plastic pot for a long time. It always had a thick trunk but an ugly and prominent pruning scar near the base that never healed over. Also, no good surface roots or trunk base. Again I decided to aerial layer it, just above the old trunk scar. It is also now ready to separate, and I can show you how I know. I hope it is now developing a good flare at the base of its trunk and a good distributed set of surface roots, but I won't finally know until I work on it at the June meeting. Come along to see the results.

Presidential Report 2010-11

“Welcome to the club” or society, of bonsai exhibitors! The BSST held its first independent exhibition over the weekend of 16-17th October, 2010, thus joining the ranks of most mainland bonsai clubs and societies who have a regular show. All involved in the running of our Exhibition felt (but then, we may be a trifle biased) it went off very well. However this feeling was reinforced by the good attendance (qualitative, *non* quantitative, as no one was counting, although our coffers did swell somewhat) but even more so by the fact that the Mayor of Clarence, Mr. Jock Campbell, who kindly officially opened the Exhibition on the Saturday, returned the next day with his wife whom he thought should see it too! The venue was second to none, The Barn, an old barn (c 1818) has been converted to an art gallery space, with appropriate lighting and white backboards. The demonstrations were well received and the sale of bonsai and related items made one think that they could well have been the proverbial hot cakes. Thanks to all involved in making it such a successful weekend.

At the AGM the office-bearers and committee were returned little changed (just older). Vice-president Herbert Harding, Secretary Evelyn Black, Treasurer Stuart Clutterbuck and Committee members David Budd, Ambrose Canning, Will Fletcher and Gill Roberts are to be thanked for their various contributions to the smooth running of the Society. Gill, Diana and Evelyn represent our Society at the Royal Agricultural Society's (RAS) planning meetings.

The usual run of shows – four – at either the Town Hall or City Hall as part of the Hobart Horticultural Society's seasonal events kept us in the public eye, as too did our display at the RAS Show, where unfortunately a nice Myrtle (*Nothofagus cunninghamii*) took someone's eye, and was never seen again. An upgrade in security is needed there.

At last the Society is incorporated, and is now a member of the AABC, thanks to the prolonged efforts of Stuart and Ambrose in achieving this.

The interesting and informative monthly talks be they demonstrations, reports on members' attendances at conferences etc kept us all entertained, and educated, and our numbers are now growing back to a comfortably-crowded mob in our (small) hall. Workshops, monthly from April to August or September (depending on the season) are being well-attended with members either working to their own ideas, or calling upon the design and artistic skills of others. Thanks to Will for allowing us to use his eminently suitable premises – Island Bonsai – for some of our workshops.

I wish the incoming committee all the best for the coming year.

Noel R Kemp



Secretary
Bonsai Society of Southern Tasmania
12 Clearwater Court
Blackmans Bay TAS 7052

2010/2011 Membership \$30 (Individual) \$40 (Couple)
 Renewing New

Name/s:Address:

.....Postcode:.....

Phone: (home)..... (work) (mobile)

Email:

I/we can assist with:

- Demonstrations Outings Shows & displays
- Newsletter production Newsletter editorial Hospitality
- Website development *(Our year is from 1st July to 30th June)*



Secretary
Bonsai Society of Southern Tasmania
12 Clearwater Court
Blackmans Bay Tasmania 7052

Committee Nomination Form

Date.....

I hereby nominate.....for the position of.....
in the Bonsai Society of Southern Tasmania.

The nomination is proposed by..... and seconded by.....

I hereby consent to being nominated for the above position.....(nominee)
(The nomination form should be signed by the proposer, seconder and nominee)