



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 231 – August 2012–

Our July meeting was opened by past vice president, Herbert Harding, in the absence of certain committee members whose travels took them “far and away”! Despite missing 9 members (including apologies) there were still 16 who braved the cooler weather to attend. Herbert was also feeling a bit under the weather on the night, however he seemed to have improved at the workshop on Sunday, 22nd July – perhaps it was the fun and games, or the lovely selection of afternoon tea we all shared!

Members were reminded there was still time to nominate for the committee prior to the AGM.

This Month’s Meeting: Tuesday, August 21st – AGM, followed by Will Fletcher’s presentation.

Vale: On a sad note, those members who knew her, were saddened to hear of the passing of former member, Betty Ford. A card expressing sympathy and condolences to her family has been forwarded.

Next Workshop: August workshop will be held on Saturday 25th at Island Bonsai, commencing at 1pm.

September Meeting: will be held on the 18th September during which Ambrose will be our presenter.

Events: Daffodil, Camellia & Floral Art Show will be held at the Town Hall from September 7-8 and, as usual, we encourage all members to bring at least one of their bonsai for the display. Plants to be brought to the Town Hall on Thursday from about 4pm. Please ensure appropriate ID for your bonsai, that it has been well watered prior to delivery, is free of weeds, pests etc. and is well-presented. If you would like to be in attendance for an hour or two on either of the two days, you would be most welcome. Mention will be made at the August meeting.

Raffle: There were 3 prizes available – Helene chose the pot, Rose won the raffia and Trish won the spray heads.

Happy Birthday: Greetings to members celebrating their birthdays during the month of August – you have the choice of Peridot or Sardonyx as your birthstones. Star sign Leo influences the month until 24th August, when replaced by Virgo. Leo is a fire sign – enthusiastic, energetic and assertive, while earthy Virgo is practical, realistic and restrained.

Display Table: Various bonsai appeared including a *Juniperus sergeantii* in a cascade style; Stuart’s myrtle on which the top section had died but re-produced new growth lower down; both Herbert and Gill brought their well-developed corokia’s along; Gill also has been experimenting with a rock planting – consisting of mondo grass, moss and small native ferns, and she also showed her rosemary, cheeseberry and a larix deciduous; Heather brought a Thuja orientalis and Diana included a strawberry pine and a Melaleuca.

Meeting closed at 8.25pm after which Stuart created a very attractive native woodland landscape with a collection of myrtles he collected from the Geeveston area last year. He had made a rough sketch of the placement of trees and rocks and, as he worked, created small valley and hills to add interest to the scene. We look forward to observing its progress over time.

Member Profile: *Diana Jones.*

Seeing Bonsai for the first time at the Dahlia Show, in the Derwent Entertainment centre I instantly decided that would be my future hobby. So a joining form was taken. On retiring, 3 years later, I attended a meeting knowing nothing about Bonsai. By reading and listening carefully, knowledge was slowly gained. Over 20 years later I'm still learning. For instance, Andrew Ward showed us how to select the correct thickness of wire to use, before that it had just been guesswork.

My first job was as an experimental scientist with plants, and I've used this experience over the years to try many different species and styles just to find out which work best for me. Others might disapprove of my choices, but if it pleases ME, it's right. Ideas and physical ability change as you get older, so there is always a good supply of my discards at sales.

Soon after starting Bonsai, natives had to be tried and I like to think that my successes inspired Will. Native pines, such as Huon Pine and Creeping Strawberry Pine are much more elegant than exotic pines, but that's my opinion. Colour and form will continue to influence my choice much more than convention. (Diana may have some plants for sale at the August meeting.)

Tip: Iron sulphate is good for treating moss on tree trunks.

Root Mealy Bugs: At our July meeting, Gill brought along a jar containing a few insects she had discovered amongst the roots of her Corokea when re-potting. They have since been identified as root mealy bugs, and can be a major problem to our bonsai if not dealt with promptly, because they are capable of spreading to your other plants. They belong to the Pseudococcidae family. They are soft-bodied, sucking insects that attack the tips or roots (new growth), and are difficult to see. They can cause yellowing leaves and often kill bonsai. If you take bonsai out of its container and examine the roots and find whitish-grey clumps that look like cotton balls, your bonsai is infested with this insect. In the course of researching information on how to get rid of them, several suggestions came to the fore:

- One method is to try drowning them (first remove all the soil) and submerge the roots of the plant into water at a maintained temperature of 120 degrees for a few hours. Alternatively, submerge the plant into water and leave for several days. However, there are plants which would not like their roots submerged for long periods of time, and 120 degrees may not be okay for all plants either.
- Another alternative is to spray the roots using 1 part methylated spirits to 10 parts water.
- There is also a product called "Clensal" which can be used.
- Lastly, use Diazinon and, in cases where the infestation is severe, water the soil with a solution of Metasystox.
- On a website on Root Mealy Bugs, *Bayer Advanced 12 month Tree & Shrub Protect & Feed* had been used. However, this product only seems to be available in USA & South America.

The soil should be carefully disposed of to avoid transferring the pests to other plants in the garden – so the compost heap might not be a good idea. And pots should be thoroughly cleaned to ensure no unhatched eggs remain.

(Editor's note: Gill reported that she removed as much of the soil as possible, then immersed the roots in a bucket containing water and methylated spirits, swirled it around and left it for a while. She then took out the plant and "picked off the little blighters" before repeating the process. Satisfied that she had got rid of the insects, the roots were rinsed off with clean water and the plant has been repotted.)

Despite many trials and tribulations over his travel arrangements, President Noel managed to provide the following report on the Society's activities 2011/12.

Presidential Report 2011-12

A busy year was 2011-12. In six weeks, between mid-April and late-May the Society ran or was involved in seven events, of varying magnitude. The remainder of the year ticked over nicely and at a more moderate tempo.

Eighteen months after the inaugural Exhibition we had our second Exhibition on the weekend of 14-15th April, again at the eminently suitable venue, The Barn, Rosny. The event was kindly opened by The Hon Lara Giddings, MP, Premier of Tasmania. It was with more than a polite interest that she spoke, and perused the trees, both before and after the official opening.

Many remarks were heard from the visitors to the Exhibition regarding the colours of the various fruits and the autumnal leaves, which reinforced the Society's decision to hold the show in autumn this time.

Thanks to all those members, and a number of partners, who gave so freely of their time in the planning, setting up, sales, raffles, demonstrations, clearing up, etc, all of which helped to make the weekend such a success.

Five weeks later our other major event was held (mostly) at the Bellerive Community Arts Centre (BCAC). Visiting AABC Tutor Andrew Ward, from Adelaide ran a weekend of workshops and an evening public demonstration. Many Society members availed themselves of Andrew's expertise at the workshops – and to their financial advantage as the Society subsidized each participant – coming away well pleased with their various “transformation”, some more major than others!

Meanwhile back at the ranch ...members kept the bonsai displays at the four various seasonal shows of the Hobart Horticultural Society at the Hobart Town Hall up to par (I suppose, by definition, they can't all be above average!).

Our monthly winter workshops, held either at Will's (Island Bonsai, thanks Will) or the BCAC were as usual, well attended, with much being achieved by an enthusiastic lot of members. (The afternoon teas themselves are enough to warrant attending.)

The monthly meetings continue to be educational, interesting and entertaining with demonstrations, conference reviews with “slide shows”, also of botanical aspects of some members' holidays. Stuart, Gill, Diane, Will, Ambrose and others contributed to these successful evenings.

The annual barbecues – December, Risdon Brook Dam, weather a trifle inclement, and January, Evelyn and Arnold's – were enjoyed for the social aspects, as they are a non-tree event.

Many thanks to Herbert Harding who stood down from the position of Vice President last AGM, a position he had held since 1987. With a peripatetic President, Herbert earned his keep especially at many an AGM over those years.

Thanks to our new Vice President, Ambrose Canning, our hard working Secretary, Evelyn Black, Treasurer, Stuart Clutterbuck, Librarian, David Budd, who is always there at the back of the hall watching over the books, and Committee Members, Will Fletcher, Herb Harding and Gill Roberts, our ever-thoughtful tea lady.

Thanks too, to all our members and their various contributions which continues to make our Society a group to which it is a pleasure to belong.

I wish the incoming committee every success for the coming year.

Noel R Kemp

Editor:

Besides myself, I know there are one or two other Society members who have Luma's as bonsai. Not having seen one growing naturally, I was surprised and very interested to identify this one as *Luma apiculata* (Chilean Myrtle) when on a recent visit to our local garden centre. I'm not sure these photos do it justice – the sun was in quite the wrong spot. But I was most attracted by the beautiful golden colour of the trunk. The tree is around 10 years old, but as a bonsai, I think it would probably be regarded as a 2-3 person bonsai!



As mentioned Noel is, again, on his travels. This time he's chosen a Dragoman tour through most of what he refers to as "the Stans" – namely Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan . (Afghanistan & Pakistan aren't mentioned – perhaps he decided to give them a miss!) David Budd has passed on a few of Noel's missives (some running to 3 & 4 pages) so I'll try to break them down to a couple of paragraphs! Readers should note that "Uz" is the abbreviation for Uzbekistan – I think.

It seems the first part of his journey involved numerous hours spent travelling over dreadful roads in a 6 wheel Mercedes truck with a group consisting of eight different nationalities, ranging in age from our intrepid traveler's to those in their 20's. Their first night camping out in the "middle of nowhere" seems to have been rather uncomfortable with a number of the group being violently ill. Noel missed out on the vomiting!

The following day around lunchtime, they drove off the main road towards a river, and suddenly broke through the hard silt-clay crust, where it took 8 hours before they were finally hauled out by a big caterpillar digger – this after a 30 tonne truck which had tried

pulling them out became bogged and had to be pulled out by a second 30 tonne truck! This exercise was repeated a couple of hours later, after which (many hours later) a low loader had a go.

The Chicken and Dancing night! (is described in Noel's own words) as follows:-

“It's a restaurant in Tashkent Uz which has only chicken on its menu. And it has dancing. The trouble is, the dancing area is flagstones/quarry tiles, ill-laid, and as most of us were in thongs (in fact, I think no one opted for boots), it was a lot of sore-footed people who departed (in various states of inebriation) at the end of the night.

There were 14 of us in our group, and we ordered 7 kg of chicken! It was cut into 1"/~3 cm wide slices (the whole carcass), almost Chinese-style, but, we all agreed it was the best chicken we ever had. It was served with various dipping sauces, and oily, soft soggy chips (which arrived half an hour after we had finished all the chicken). Vodka was cheaper than soft drink, so people were downing the former, as well as the latter, but I suspect the former in greater quantities. The consequences during the course of the evening showed up dramatically as the night wore on!

The music was sort of Turkish/Eastern and there were quite a few ladies - locals mostly - up there doing sort of belly-dancing moves. Not my style of dancing that's for sure. Some of the girls from our group got up and joined in, along with a few of the fellas. The music changed tempo a bit and I managed to apply myself to the task. To cut a long story short, and much to the amusement of our group, I was invited to dance with (and I didn't get the names of all the inviters) Olga, Tanya, Medina and Galina, plus a fella, ~45., who invited me to dance with him, his wife, and their 13 y old daughter. I guessed her age, by sign language with the father, as I could tell by the degree of embarrassment by the poor thing that she was about 13! Who wants to dance with such an old foreigner, and in public. I continued to dance with the father and mother! Galina raced off halfway through one number and returned with her phone, to display proudly, a photo of her mid-teenage son. Not sure why she did that! I managed a hand spring or two, and some leg circles, and all and sundry wanted to shake my hand, and introduce me all around. Friendly people be the Uzbeks!”

Needless to say, things did get a trifle worse for Noel, but that will be a tale for our next newsletter!