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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 242 – August 2013

The July meeting was opened at 7.45 pm by Vice President Ambrose Canning, welcoming 23 members, with apologies from President Noel, Will Fletcher and Alison Titchen.

Members were reminded that membership fees are due, and election nominations are being accepted for the incoming committee.

At our October meeting all those members with small (Mame and Shohin) bonsai are invited to bring them along for a special night. And for our November meeting, all members are to bring along **one tree** – it doesn't have to be in a bonsai pot, as long as it is in training as a bonsai. A ten minute discussion on each tree will ensue, with the owner able to seek advice, suggestions re its training and subsequent development.

Your Committee met on 9th July during which several items were discussed, including Andrew Ward's visit (see details below), our forthcoming exhibition and the 2016 convention. Once Will Fletcher has returned, he and Ambrose will push on with a review of suitable venues for the event, considerations include accommodation and conference facilities and a decision on whether to invite an international bonsai presenter.

Andrew Ward will be holding workshops on 12th & 13th of April 2014, followed by a demonstration at our Society meeting on Tuesday, 15th April. We hope as many members as possible will participate in these workshops which provide the opportunity to enhance our bonsai skills. Think about a specific tree you would like to work on with Andrew – it may be one you've neglected, or had for a while but are undecided how to develop its potential, or it may be an existing bonsai you feel needs improvement. It might also be the one he gave you assistance with at last year's workshops!

A reminder that a roster has been set up for our October Exhibition so, if you haven't yet offered help, but are able to assist in any way – even for a couple of hours – it would be most appreciated. The roster will be available at the August meeting.

This Month's Meeting: Tuesday, 20th August commencing at 7.30pm. will begin with the AGM, followed by a normal meeting, during which Tony Hewer will be discussing several topics including correct wiring, pruning methods, display stands – simple designs to make, importance of caring for your bonsai tools etc.

And don't forget a tree for the display table.

Workshops: July's workshop accommodated 11 members, and Tony Hewer lent some much-needed assistance during the afternoon. Next workshop will be held on Saturday, 24th August again at Bellerive Community Arts Centre, commencing at 12 noon. Cost is \$3 and a plate of something to share is always welcome. Preparation of plants for our October

exhibition should be in full swing, so if you need advice about those you plan to exhibit (or any other) bring them along. These workshops are worth attending – even if you don't have something to work on – talk to others about what they are doing, ask questions, observe and learn. If you need wire, our supply has just been topped up. And, as always, the afternoon teas are very tasty!



We were all surprised when Tony Brown brought in the maple he had used for his thread grafting presentation. However, Tony had to repeat the exercise at the workshop because an outdoor chair, blown by the wind, had fallen on his tree and completely destroyed the work he'd done at Tuesday's meeting! Mother Nature doesn't always play fair – I suppose.

Tony Hewer has been making spatula tools used for tamping down soil when repotting – these are available for \$10 each. Evelyn still has sets of plastic waterers for \$2.50 a set of 3, as well as fine and medium Klingspor Sandflex cleaning/polishing blocks for \$7 each.

September Meeting: Tuesday 20th commencing at 7.30pm. Something different as we have a representative from our Quarantine Dept. who will be discussing plant quarantine issues, hopefully providing a clearer picture of what and how plants can be brought into Tasmania as well as taken to other states. There are one or two newer members who have chosen to live on our beautiful island, while their bonsai remain on the mainland. Perhaps they can find a safe way to bring them over.

Other Events:

Saturday August 31st – Tony Bebb workshops at Launceston (contact Ambrose Canning – details July newsletter) if you would like to go.

September 6th & 7th – Daffodil, Camellia & Floral Art Show at Town Hall. Members are reminded that plants be delivered to the Town Hall on Thursday, 5th September from about 4pm and picked up on Sunday between 4- 4.30pm. Plants should be well watered (they will receive light spraying during the show), pots clean and free of weeds etc. Information should accompany each tree, and stands are very useful.

October 15th – Society monthly meeting

October 19th & 20th our Exhibition at Rosny Barn, so take advantage of our workshops and get working on those bonsai!

Raffle: *Cedrus deodor* was won by Herbert – as it was his birthday, it probably “made his day”, and we look forward to seeing its development under Herbert’s hands. Robyn chose the wire and the bonsai tool bag (donated by Tony Hewer) was won by Anita.

Display Table: Diana’s evergreen Corky Oak (*Quercus suber*) posed a problem about when it should be re-potted, and she has been advised that September would be a good time.; her deciduous Elm can be re-potted at this weekend’s workshop despite not having lost its leaves, and her liquidambar can also be re-potted.

Gill’s Trident maple forest consisting of 7 trees grown from seed 1992; and she had a cute little pot containing crocuses in bloom. Her Corokea is still being infested with root mealy bugs – soft-bodied, sucking insects that attack the tips or roots (new growth) and are difficult to see. (A detailed article on these pests appeared in our August 2012 newsletter.)

Heather’s planting of 3 *Pinus radiata*, which she collected from a dig in 2010, is displayed in a large, shallow, oval tray also featuring a nice piece of old root and mosses. While the root will rot over time, it could be replaced with the right rock.

Yvonne has a *Pieris* in a round blue pot which is showing promise with a second flush of flower buds appearing. Advised to re-pot later in September.

Evelyn’s Elm (in development in plastic pot) was pruned several times through spring/summer but is still producing new foliage. Noel had wired it in May 2010 to shape as a triple trunk style, it was re-wired in August 2011 and placed in a larger pot for further development. It was a shoot from a neighbour’s tree. It will be worked on at the workshop.

Some members have problems with blackbirds removing moss from their bonsai, and they have resorted to various methods to prevent this. For example, Diana uses the mesh bags which oranges come in; Anita uses gutter guard; and Cameron has suggested mouse traps make a useful deterrent – hopefully the birds are able to fly away!



Meeting closed around 8.15pm, after which Tony Brown assembled his tools and equipment for his presentation on Thread grafting. The tree, a maple, was dug up from a friend’s garden.



Introducing his topic



Drilling commences!

Thread-grafting

Thread-grafting is the easiest way of attaching new branches where they are missing on a bonsai. The basic principal of thread-grafting is that a hole is made through the trunk (or another position where a new shoot is needed); the scion (new shoot) is then threaded through the hole and fixed into position. As the scion and the trunk continue to grow they swell and are forced together; eventually grafting together.

The only possibility of the graft failing is if the scion is separated from the donor too early, before it is successfully grafted into its new position. Though it may seem harmful to the tree, drilling a hole through the trunk only damages a small area of live wood at the entry and exit points. The graft does look a little ugly while the actual graft is taking place and will need to be in position for one to two years. However, afterwards, the resulting wounds are minimal and very hard to detect.

It is important to protect the graft and stop the “donor” branch from slipping or moving to allow the graft to take. Once the graft has taken do not cut the donor branch off directly near the trunk or entry side to the graft, but allow a length of branch to keep “feeding” the graft. The branch will eventually die back and you can cut it back and allow the wound to heal.

This method is suitable for all deciduous and broadleaf trees but not for coniferous species where complete defoliation of the scion will result in its failure.

(Ed. Note: Bonsai4me and Tony Brown’s observations.)



Being rather large to call “bonsai” Tony set to work chopping it down, doing some jin work, then decided to aerial layer to reduce it further as well as better develop the root structure.



He had already thread grafted to add another branch, which has grown well, with new bud development quite obvious. Tony explained that it is important to start with a thin drill bit, progressing to a larger one so that the hole is slightly larger than the shoot (scion) to be threaded. The angle of the hole to the tree should be about 45°.

(All photos courtesy of Ambrose Canning.)



Member Profile: Gill Roberts

Scottish by birth (although born in India) I arrived in Tasmania in 1946. First went to school in Gray on the Elephant Pass.

Because my father had worked for the Shell Company in India, I landed/fell into a job with Shell in Hobart and boarded at Westella in Elizabeth Street, which was a place for young girls from country areas!

Met and married Glenn, and we have two sons and a daughter. In 1989 a girlfriend mentioned there was a Bonsai meeting in Bellerive – did we want to go? So here I am – in 2013 – how time flies!

My first plants in plastic pots came from Brown Mountain Bonsai Nursery, when we went to see the lavender farm nearby. My Larch is still alive and one of my “babies” – how it has grown!!

One of the many reasons I enjoy Bonsai is that I find it relaxing. It makes you aware of and appreciate the change of seasons, makes you notice and see how trees are in nature and, because I also use some of my photos to make cards (my other hobby), I am surprised at the different shades of green that are out there.

By being part of our Club, we all learn by observing and doing, meeting and mixing with other like minded people from all walks of life, and having fun and a bit of a laugh.

(Ed. Note: Thanks Gill for giving us that insight and how you became “hooked” on bonsai!)

(Ed. Note: I received the following email on 18th July from Kristian Thor Holvila:

“I’m a bonsai potter from Sweden, Scandinavia. I have been working with ceramics since 1996 and began producing bonsai pots in 2008, first for my own trees, finally to start selling to other collectors in 2013. For the moment I make about 50 pots a year, all of them hand built/sculptured from slabs without using any kind of molds. They are all totally unique and all signed and stamped. I have a website. <http://www.holvilabonsaipot.com/> If you find it interesting, I would be grateful if you could forward the address to your members and collectors and put a link on your website or Facebook page.

With kind regards,
Kristian Thor Holvila”

(Ed. Note: He only sells through EBay at this stage, but his website is very interesting. I will be in Stockholm at the end of our cruise, but would not be able to visit him as his studio is near to Goteborg. However, I may make some inquiries via the internet beforehand – if I get some time!!!)