



President: Noel Kemp
☎ (03) 6243 6296

Secretary: Anita Shanahan
6 Claude Street
New Town, TAS 7008
☎ (03) 6228 1281
E-mail: anita_shanahan@yahoo.com.au

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.bonsai-southern-tasmania.org.au

Newsletter No 248 March 2014

Our summer weather has certainly been “interesting” if nothing else! Strong winds, sudden heavy rain, mild balmy days and evenings with a sprinkling of heat thrown into the mix. One wonders what we might expect during autumn, as the Bureau seems to consider the likelihood of rain, just as equally, unlikely. All we can do is wait and see.

President Noel opened our first meeting for 2014 at 7.45 pm welcoming 21 members with apologies from Heather and Trish. Jarryd Taki, recently arrived from interstate, also paid us a visit and we hope to see more of Jarryd in the future.

Members were reminded of Andrew Ward’s workshops which will be held over 12th & 13th of April. There are still participation places available at these workshops which are arranged for the benefit of members to help enhance their skills and perhaps learn new techniques in the art of bonsai. By subsidising, your Society has kept the cost to \$10 for participation, the same as 2012. Andrew will also provide a presentation to members at our April meeting.

Our own workshops commence on Saturday, 22nd March continuing monthly, with the last being held on Saturday 20th September. Note all workshops this year will be held at Bellerive. If anyone would like a list of items to bring to workshops, let me know.

A decision was made to subscribe to the new “Australian Bonsai” publication which is published 2 monthly.

President Noel announced that both Gill Roberts and Tony Brown were stepping down from the committee. Gill has served on the committee for several years and is a very active member who ensures we enjoy our coffee and tea etc. after meetings and workshops. Gill is always available to help with setting up our displays at the Art Shows and our own exhibitions, and has several lovely bonsai too. Tony, besides his work commitments, and his role as “Dad” to little Sarah now aged 15 months, is finding life rather full on at the moment. Our President has not been getting things easy either, with very recent surgery to fix a hernia which had him in some considerable discomfort – to say the least! Hopefully, he’ll be feeling more like himself very soon.

A dig for native species (with an emphasis on Myrtles) is being planned in the Huon for Sunday 30th March which, hopefully, can be confirmed at our next meeting.

Raffle: Robyn chose the chopsticks; Ambrose opted for the fuchsia; Tony decided on the hawthorn; John chose the chameacyperus and the maple was won by Evelyn.

March Meeting: Tuesday 18th March at 7.30pm. New secretary, Anita, will provide us with an insight into Jade as bonsai. Don’t forget the display table, even if it’s something for which you would like advice or comment – including Jade!

Events:

Next month's meeting 15th April with a presentation by visiting tutor, Andrew Ward.

Canberra Bonsai Society is hosting the tenth national exhibition of Australian Plants as Bonsai and the third symposium on developing Australian plants as bonsai. This combined event will be held in Canberra on 15-16 March 2014. The theme for the event is 'Naturally Inspired'.

Email: secretary@cbs.org.au

Bonsai Convention International, Gold Coast, Qld. August 21st – 24th, 2014. Details at the following websites:

www.goldcoast2014.bonsai-bci.com or www.aabcltd.org

Our Website: Continually being updated by our enthusiastic Treasurer.

Library Collection:

As most of you are aware, the Society has a selection of books and journals which members can borrow for a month at a time. There is no charge for this service, as it's regarded as a further source of gaining information and improving our bonsai skills.

New members in particular might find copies of "*Bonsai Today*" especially helpful on re-potting, shaping and pruning, see numbers 50 – 52, 57 -60, 63, 65 and 66. The first 49 copies also include some useful information, with bonsai enthusiasts such as Peter Adams looking at optional designs for particular trees.

Presentation: Chris Xepapas provided us with a great deal of information on basic design and development techniques for pine bonsai. In his introduction we heard that he has been working with bonsai for some 22 years and this presentation was dedicated to his late brother who, sadly, passed away recently. Chris will be travelling to Japan to spend a month learning more about bonsai, and we look forward to hearing about his experiences later in the year. The following notes were provided by Chris.

Notes for pine bonsai demonstration by Chris Xepapas

Species: There are various species of pine and the two main ways of telling species apart are the clusters of needles and cone shape size. Knowing your species will determine how you style your tree - this applies for all bonsai.

Two needle varieties: *Pinus thunbergia* (Japanese Black Pine) , *Pinus nigra* (Corsican Pine), *Pinus sylvestris* (Scotts Pine), *Pinus mugo* (Mountain Pine)

Three needle varieties: *Radiata* (Monterey Pine), *Pinus coulterii* (Coulter Pine)

Five needle varieties: *Pinus parviflora* (Japanese White Pine), *Pinus strobus* (Eastern White Pine), *Pinus cembra* (Arolla Pine).

Please note that people refer to all conifers as pines but in actual fact a pine is a pine, Cyprus is a Cyprus and a cedar is a cedar etc. Conifer is the correct terminology if one is unsure of the species.

Styling

Some pointers to consider when styling:

- how big do you want your bonsai to be in reference to your material;
- what drew you to that tree and how can you bring out that like in your design;
- what style would suit your tree in regards to trunk movement, foliage size etc.;

- movement of the tree and positioning in its future bonsai pot;
- then finally, branch placement, apex and nebari.

Techniques

- Needle plucking- an important technique used to promote back budding, done from Feb – April - leave the white sheath
- Sacrificial branch- used to help thicken the trunk.
- Guide wire- used for long term branch placement with minimal impact.
- Wiring- absolutely crucial in pine bonsai design and development. Remember to always wire right to the end of each tip. This allows fine placement of each needle cluster.

Soil

Good soil mix for pines should be well drained. My pine mix consists of up to 50-70% coarse aggregate and the remaining equal parts peat and well-decomposed pine bark or pulverized cow manure. Globally the bonsai community is using non- organic potting mediums such as Acadama from Japan (not available in Australia). Zeolite is also being used as an addition to existing mixes for its water retention and mineral properties. I repot all my pines in the first week of August. The older the pine, the less you repot.

Care

The only real care required is FULL sun. Please remember to rotate your bonsai if they are positioned against a wall to allow equal light to the tree monthly. 5 needle varieties need partial shade on really hot days. Water is required daily in summer. Keep an eye out for woolly aphids, pyrethrum usually kills them instantly.

Chris also demonstrated the importance of removing any foliage “hanging down”, to give the tree clear lines.



The three photos above were downloaded from Google website "Images for bonsai"

Notes for March

During summer some bonsai have needed shelter from the hot afternoon sun. Now that the weather is becoming a little less hot, trees will not need so much shade. Space your trees so they have light on all parts of them, particularly the lower branches. It is a good idea to turn the trees frequently so that all areas receive direct sunlight. More attention to deciduous trees will help to get better autumn colour, give them more sun and less water, but always water enough to prevent the soil from drying out.

Pests

- Woolly aphid on crab-apples can be sprayed with a soapy spray such as Clensel.
- Borers in casuarinas, tea-trees, etc. – check the bark for holes (often obscured by a silky film) or sawdust. Use a piece of fine wire to remove the borers. Plugging holes with Velvet soap (soft) is also effective.
- Slaters are so often a nuisance under pots or even getting into pots where the mesh moves. Place two or three pellets of Baysol snail and slug bait under the pots (do not forget that this substance is deadly to cats and dogs).
- Caterpillars: watch for leaves which have been chewed and remove any caterpillars you can find, or spray the tree with Clensel or your "favourite" spray.

Autumn is a good time to begin a new compost heap using leaves, twigs and roots pruned from trees, as well as discarded soil, autumn leaves, etc. Oak leaves are very good for a compost mix.

Soil from the compost heap in which leaves etc. are rotted down can, if it is fairly dry, be sieved and stored for use in winter, when it is too wet to sieve soil.

When trees are re-potted there is usually sufficient fertilizer put in the soil to feed the tree for about two months. By that time the fertilizer is either used up or leached out of the soil due to watering. Regular fertilizing then becomes necessary.

Trees respond to water, fertilizer and sunshine by putting out new growth. This is necessary if the trees are to remain healthy; it provides regrowth and new growth, giving the bonsai grower a choice of material for pruning and shaping. To provide new branches and twigs, allow the desired branches to grow and, when they reach the right length, prune lightly. Unnecessary growth should be pruned from branches and trunks before it weakens existing branches and leaves.

Cuttings taken at the right time of the year can provide new trees for groups or single plantings. When trimming native trees such as Tea-tree (*Leptospermum*), Melaleucas, Grevilleas and Figs (*Ficus*), take and plant some cuttings. Early flowering Sasanqua Camellias are pruned as soon as they finish flowering; these cuttings will also grow.

Fill a small plastic pot with a 50/50 mixture of sand and peat moss, then place the cuttings close together around the edge of the pot. Water it and keep it in a warm sheltered position.

Cuttings often grow if they are placed around the edge of the container in which the parent tree is growing.

Re-Potting: Pines, cedars and junipers can now be re-potted, but do not do them during heat wave weather. Figs can also be re-potted, although many will have already been done during summer.

Evergreens could be done towards the end of this month, but would probably be better left until next month. When a pine tree is removed from its dish, there may be a white substance called Mycorrhiza around its root ball. Collect some of this and put it in the new soil with the tree, as it is a fungus which forms a beneficial relationship with the roots of the tree.

The following information was forwarded by Glenys Barnes, Secretary of the AABC

Harry Tomlinson: 1943 – 2014

It is with great sorrow that we have to announce the death of Harry Tomlinson early on Sunday morning, 2 March 2014.

You will all remember well the dedicated bonsai artist and owner of Greenwood Gardens and join us in our sorrow in losing Harry, after a sad period during which he suffered from Alzheimer's. His death followed a period of rapid deterioration in his health during the last few weeks.

Many will remember him for his bonsai skills, his great sense of humour and his excellent books. Please send any letters of condolence to Greenwood Bonsai Studio where we will be holding an open book of condolence alongside the trees that he created.

The funeral will be a quiet family affair but a memorial service will be held at a later date.

With great sorrow.

Petra, Corin and Paul.

corin@bonsai.co.uk

Ed. Comment: I'm sure there are a few of us who have at least one of Harry's books, even if we never had the opportunity to meet the man himself.

