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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.bonsai-southern-tasmania.org.au

Newsletter No. 275 - August 2016

President Ambrose opened the July meeting at 7.35pm, with a welcome to 22 members, and two visitors - Andrew Bradbury and Mark Donnelly. There were 8 apologies - seems quite a contingent of Tasmanians drift to warmer climes at this time of year. I suppose we can't blame them, for it has been rather a wild (gale force winds), cold (frost and snow) and wet (lots of rain) winter - just for a change!

There was a reminder that membership fees are now due - for those who haven't yet done so, note information under "subscriptions due" (see page 2).

Our August meeting commences with the AGM and committee nominations, which can still be received on the night. Will Fletcher is standing down this year. Please think about contributing to the committee - new ideas and suggestions are always welcome, as are new committee members. And, with the convention done and dusted, it will be less hectic - a good time to learn.

2016 Convention badges and catalogues are still available for those who would like a reminder of that very special event.

A reminder that the **Daffodil, Camellia & Floral Art Show will be held on Aug. 26th & 27th at the Town Hall**. Trees to be delivered after 4pm on Thursday, August 25th, and picked up on Saturday, August 27th from 4.30pm. With all the trees displayed at the Convention, there's no excuse for any member not to have at least one at the Town Hall. If you need help re delivery or pick up afterwards, please let us know either at the August meeting, or email to myself. And if you can spare an hour or so either on Friday between 1-5 pm or Saturday between 11am and 4pm it would be very much appreciated. You don't need a wealth of bonsai knowledge to answer questions - most visitors are happy to admire the display. Ensure trees have been well watered, pots are clean, potting mix free of weeds etc. and trees looking their best. Certainly this time of year our deciduous may just be shy of foliage but, with our weather fluctuations, who knows! I've just noticed tiny green "dots" on mine.

There were two t-shirts from the convention promotion left over, and Chris stirred members with a short auction, raising \$17.

Raffle: Scott chose the pot; Herbert opted for the fertilizer and Robin took the spray bottle.

Display table: Don't forget our monthly display table. No matter what time of year our bonsai, be they bereft of foliage or covered in blossom, have their beauty. And one can always be sure of some advice if they bring along something "untouched". Again a small collection appeared on the display table including a very nice Sergeant's Juniper (Bunning's special) according to Cameron; one of Chris's favourite specimens - a dwarf Scotts Pine; Diana's Creeping Strawberry Pine (*Microcachrys tetragona*) - a prostrate native shrub found in alpine & open sub-alpine areas of central, western and southern Tasmania, it is fire sensitive and only grows in fire-free areas, amongst rocks. It is slow grown and may live for hundreds of years, and is endemic to Tasmania being the only species in this genus. Diana keeps her specimen wired to encourage upright growth - if the wire is removed, within a short time it would revert to its natural growing habit. Hans described his small specimen as "a weed from the garden" which, despite several members giving it a close inspection, remains a mystery - for the time being. There was some suggestion it could be a Westringia, but whatever it is, it looked rather cute.

Cameron is also developing an Elm he purchased at a private sale in Sandy Bay (which I think several members visited and made purchases). His elm is being trained in an informal upright style and he keeps the top trimmed, while allowing the bottom to grow in order to develop a nice thick trunk.

A bit of pot-stirring ensued when Alex brought along a few specimens from her visit to Cradle Mountain - Herbert felt she should have at least copped a fine for her "activities", especially since he had received a warning about feeding currawongs! She was advised to let her small specimens grow on for a while to allow further growth and development.

Ambrose called "time" and there was a rush to the kitchen before Chris provided a presentation dealing with re-potting. Cameron was partially involved, taking the opportunity to repot his juniper. Chris began by telling us that some bonsai nurseries in Japan are delaying their re-potting until the first leaves are about to unfurl, at which time they include some fertilizer in the mix, whereas we repot earlier, and wait about 3 - 4 weeks before fertilizing. Chris uses a coarse, washed aggregate, well decomposed pine bark and coco peat for his mix, and while recognising that members have their own combinations, suggested the most important consideration is that the mix is sufficiently friable to encourage the fine roots so necessary in bonsai, and should be well draining. Fly screen is not recommended for covering the holes in pots, as those fine hair-like roots become entangled in the tiny holes of the mesh.

It's important to sort out the roots and nebari during repotting, as the tree could remain in the pot for 4-5 years before its next repotting. Untangle roots carefully - if there is any root-wrap (roots fused to trunk) try to unwrap them, otherwise cut them from the trunk carefully (this may need to be done over one or two years - make notes of such issues as reminders for the following year. Large roots can be cut back to feeder roots, and bottom roots can be cut back - it's the fine roots we need to encourage.

Not everyone wires their trees into pots, but with the wild weather we've been experiencing, it's probably a good idea, unless you have a very sheltered area for your bonsai. Always put the tie wire on the inside of the holes, create a mound of potting material, place the tree on the mound and push it down into the mound so that the potting mix is pushed up into the tree's roots. Compact soil right down and round the roots as this helps to restrict the roots.

REMINDER - Just in time for re-potting our bonsai

Harmony Garden Centre is offering our Society 10 litre bags of Debco potting mix at \$6 per bag (same price as last year). Offer is open to Society members from 1st July to 31st August 2016. Orders can be given to Gill (6247 9719) or members can visit Harmony at 450 South Arm Rd. Lauderdale. Don't forget to let staff know you are a Bonsai Society member to get this special price.

Subscriptions Now Due

Subscriptions for 2016-17 remain unchanged at \$35 for a single and \$45 for a couple at the same address. Payment options for membership can be made as follows:

1. By electronic fund transfer (EFT) to the Society's Commonwealth Bank of Australia Account
Account name: *BSST Account*
BSB No.: *067000*
Account #: *28039262*
Reference: *Your surname*
2. Payment through a bank branch using the details above.
3. By cheque, made payable to "BSST Account" and sent to
Treasurer,
Bonsai Society of Southern Tasmania Inc.
3/54 Quayle Street
Sandy Bay, TAS 7005
4. By cheque or cash paid at a monthly meeting or workshop of the Society.

Please note: cash or cheque payments will be accepted by treasurer, Rob, who is expected at our August meeting.

Bonsai Events & Diary Dates:

Next meeting: Tuesday, 16th August at Bellerive Community Arts Centre, commencing at 7.30pm besides holding our AGM and election of the committee for next year, Ambrose will be our presenter see information on page 6-7.

Next workshop: Sunday, 28th August 2016 at Bellerive Community Arts Centre from 1 - 4pm. Even if you don't have a tree to bring, it's worth attending these afternoons, with experienced bonsai artists available for advice and assistance. Cost is \$3 per workshop and members are asked to bring a plate of something to share at afternoon tea - there's always something yummy to whet the appetite!

September meeting on Tuesday 20th- Will Fletcher is going to talk to us on Bonsai Masters

Victorian Native Bonsai Club Sale Day - Saturday, 20th August. Email: secnativeclub@gmail.com

Bonsai Society Exhibition 15th & 16th October 2016 at The Barn - our Spring Show, and another good reason to attend workshops!

Annual Garden & Bonsai Sale - Saturday, November 19th 2016



Open by appointment

Tel.: 0439 383 365

Email: cxepapas@gmail.com

Library Collection:

The Society's selection of books and journals is available for members to borrow for a month at a time, without charge. 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 useful information, with bonsai enthusiasts such as Peter Adams looking at optional designs for particular trees.

Invitation:

If you have something interesting you would like to share with other members, or a request for information, let's hear from you. And if you'd like to tell us about yourself and your own "bonsai journey", it gives everyone an opportunity of getting to know you better. Photos are also accepted - whether they are your own, or something from the internet (don't forget to include your source!).

Committee Members & Contact details:

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BSST Presidents Report, August 2016

As usual at this time of year I would like to thank the current Society executive, appointed officers, committee members and other volunteers for the time and work they have put into Club affairs during this last year. Also this year a special thank you to everyone who contributed to our AABC convention in May, both members and non-members, it was a resounding success.

For the Club it has not been business as usual this year with a lot of hard work and long hours going into the planning for, and running of, the convention.

During this last year it has not been business as usual for Tasmania and the rest of the world, there have been extreme weather events and natural disasters, droughts and floods, bush fires, terrorist attacks and various political upheavals. It has made me stop and think how lucky we are.

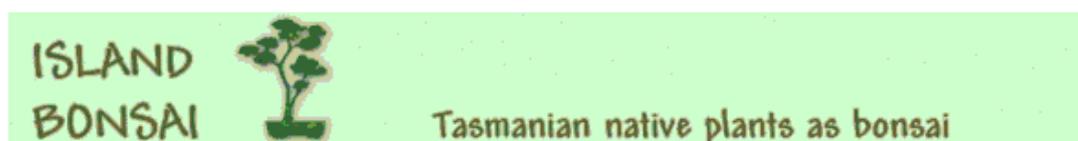
We are lucky to live in a politically stable and democratic nation. It has led me to think about the elements supporting this and the similarities to our humble Society. There are remarkable similarities. Both have a constitution setting the guiding principles and rules under which we govern and operate. Both have elected representatives elected in accordance with the constitution to undertake the business at hand and control the finances. Both in their constitution have means for people to question or challenge their elected representatives. Both hold meetings that are in part guided by their constitution but also in part guided by past precedent.

Your president is not getting visions of grandeur, but I simply think it is great that the stable and democratic governance of our Society shares something in common with our State and Nation, and with other great stable and democratic nations around the world. It is not all plain sailing but with work and sometimes compromise we make the Bonsai Society of Southern Tasmania happen.

We now have earned and received our share of the profits from the AABC convention and this will open many opportunities for the Society. We need the funds to last and benefit Society members over coming years, and we need to consider activities benefiting all desires, for social members, beginner members and expert members. It will need to be managed carefully and I invite Society members to participate. Of course a method of contributing is by volunteering for election to one of our executive positions or committee positions.

Once again I want to thank you all for your support for the Society during the last 12 months and I look forward to the year ahead of us.

Ambrose.



Open by appointment: Tel. 6239 1920

A quick word from Vice President Chris Xepapas

What an amazing year to have been a member of the Bonsai Society of Southern Tasmania, though stressful on occasions.

Early September I spent 10 days in Adelaide as a VTP performing demonstrations, workshops and most importantly judging bonsai at the Royal Adelaide Show. Andrew Ward and myself had a wonderful time visiting personal collections of bonsai as well.

Having Bjorn Bjorholm in Tasmania was a real inspiration to members. With a fantastic demonstration followed by two days of workshops, capped off with a great dinner, a visit to remember always.

November was the Japanese Society of Tasmania's 45th dinner celebration, during which the Society displayed around 15 bonsai. I also had the opportunity to give a guided tour of the bonsai to Tasmania's governor, Her Excellency Professor the Honorable Kate Warner.

Having the first ever AABC National Bonsai Convention in Tasmania was an opportunity and honour for everyone involved, including myself. We set a new bench mark when it comes to conventions in Australia with over 2200 people visiting the exhibition, and the standard of bonsai was excellent. Many hours of workshops and repetitive wiring and styling paid off.

I also noticed a big improvement in skill levels at workshops with members' wiring and pruning techniques, and styling. Well done to all who attend workshops, as it proves to those who don't attend regularly that there is a great opportunity to come along and have lessons from an AABC national tutor for only \$3 - a bargain!

I will be off to Brisbane in mid-September for workshops and demonstrations, back to Tasmania for two days then over to Victoria for a week of demonstrations and workshops. From there I travel to Japan (yes, you read correctly!) for 3 months to study bonsai at Taisho-en in Shizuoka Japan. My oyakata ("provider" or "father-figure") will be Urushibata-san and his son Taiga Urushibata. Taiga is a former student of the great Kimura. While in Japan I will endeavor to send the Society a monthly report on my progress and experiences. I will return just in time for Christmas, and an eagerly awaiting family.

As you can imagine I have had a real roller coaster of a year but wouldn't have had it any other way, having experienced so much in the art of bonsai, and having my friends from the Bonsai Society of Southern Tasmania at my side was the biggest reward.

Chris Xepapas
Heritage Bonsai Tasmania
Vice President Bonsai Society of Southern Tasmania
AABC Demonstrator VTP

August meeting demonstration by Ambrose.

I am bringing back my Red Stemmed Dogwood or Red Barked Dogwood (*Cornus alba*) which is an extremely hardy deciduous shrub originating from northern Asia. Native to Siberia, northern China and Korea.

Inspired by the bonsai of Kyuzo Murata, as shown in his book *Four Seasons of Bonsai*. At our September meeting Will is I believe going to tell us more about Kyuzo Murata, born in 1902 and official bonsai gardener to the Japanese Imperial Household for almost 60 years. He produced what I consider as outstanding elegant bonsai from common garden plants.

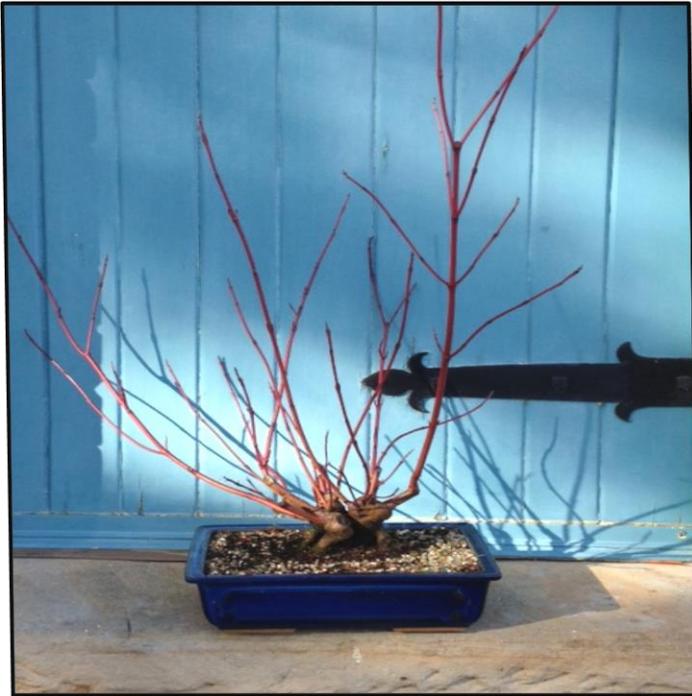
I wrote about the start and progress with this bonsai in Newsletter 208, June 2010, also worked on it at a demonstration at the July 2010 meeting and wrote about it again in Newsletter 219, July 2011. Then in winter 2015 (I think?) I brought it along and demonstrated a severe pruning, cutting it back hard.

Many members took away cuttings discarded from my previous demonstrations and I believe many of these are growing well.

My objective has been to grow a medium sized multi-trunked bonsai, in particular to show off the red coloured slender trunks and branches which will be a feature in winter. The development of a large knotted base will give it both stability and a sense of age.

To repeat what I had written about it previously, it was developed from multiple natural layerings from ground touching branches, potted up winter 2009. I used a technique described in *Bonsai Today* magazine issue 8 which I had borrowed from the Society. They were taking small seedlings and placing them through small holes in a tile or board, and when the trunks grew to fill the holes it made them swell and fuse together. I did it a bit differently because my plants were older, I cut them back inserting them from below through drilled holes in an aluminium plate. The plan was that the individual young trees would ultimately fuse together at the base and become one. Now in 2016 I can confirm that this fusing together has happened.

My plan for the demonstration at the August meeting is to prune back vigorous new growth from last summer. But now I am starting to put some thought into what I cut and what I keep and so from now on will start to develop it as a bonsai. I also need to think about my preferred viewing angle. Already a month or two ago I have done some unexciting work cleaning it up by removing dead branch stumps. I will also root prune it again, because with plenty of water and fertilizer last season it grew vigorously, and then plant it into a new bonsai pot.



The pot I have had for at least a year just waiting for the right bonsai to come along for it. It was a birthday present from my daughter Elisia and son in law Cam and came through the post from Japan. Although much smaller than the existing training pot I am using for the dogwood, the new pot will still initially look big for the pruned tree. As the bonsai grows and develops over several years the pot proportion will become better. The smaller pot will assist in slowing and limiting the rampant new growth.

The earliest illustration of a penjing is found in the Qianling Mausoleum murals at the Tang-dynasty tomb of Crown Prince Zhanghuai, dating to 706.

