



GEELONG BONSAI CLUB INCORPORATED MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JULY NEWS 2018

Monday 9 July – Demonstration/Tien Liao-Bonsai Sensation A deciduous focus.

JUNE MEETING



BONSAI SENSATION NURSERY

Our passion in developing bonsai materials offers every Australian bonsai enthusiasts the opportunities to thoroughly enjoy this wonderful art. As with any form of art, beauty is subjective. However, it is our belief that everyone is entitled to have access to the best possible bonsai materials to embark on their journey. And through that, discover the sensitivity and creativeness within them.

The one aspect of bonsai that cannot be overlooked is respect the life in a tree. And with such life, comes the constant changes that one must consider in order to bring out the natural beauty in a tree. these considerations come in the form of knowing how to: root prune, wire, water, trim branches, thicken the trunk, etc, just to name a few. and we will endeavour to address these aspects in the website.

Immaculately grown and shaped over years our selection of bonsai trees authentically adheres to the traditional practices of bonsai art. Boasting over 30,000 individual trees in our bonsai nursery Melbourne bonsai enthusiasts of all skill levels can find the perfect bonsai plant to suit the aesthetics of their environment.

Experience the calming and rewarding art of bonsai cultivation for yourself by purchasing one of our exceptional and alluring bonsai plants for sale. Whether you live in Melbourne or across Australia you can find the bonsai that's right for you in our nursery.

To help you enjoy a complete bonsai experience and to keep you bonsai live for an advanced age the team at Bonsai Sensation have a number of products to help your bonsai develop and grow. More than just a plant, bonsai represents life itself. To learn more about our extensive bonsai tree nursery and our plants for sale Melbourne locals and others across Australia can call us today on 0425 722 827.

A WORKSHOP MEETING

Long weekend meeting well attended. John Dearnley reminded us that we need to start contacting him about tree(s) you intend showing at our show.



JUNE 2018 SHOW BENCH



JULY SHOW BENCH

- Tree of the month – Deciduous Species
- Style of the Month – Formal Upright
- “Your Choice”, --**anything** that looks especially good to you at this time of the year.

HOW THE SHOW BENCH WORKS

Each month there will be a "Tree of the Month" and this can be any style. There will also be a "Style of the Month" this can be any species. The section "Your Choice" can be any species and style. There will be three sections. Novice, Intermediate, and Open. Judged as follows:

- 1 point will be awarded for every tree shown.
- 3 points for the best-judged tree in that section.
- 2 points for the second tree.
- 1 point for the third.

The "Your Choice of tree" is open to all sections. All trees presented must be in show condition, i.e. clean pots, trimmed etc. At the A.G.M. in December, there will be a prize for the Winners of each section. **Please be aware to display trees at the show bench they need to be in bonsai pots. Others to be placed elsewhere.** Check with Jason who does the monthly judging for more information.

2010 Bob White Bonsai thoughts.

The practice of growing bonsai has evolved gradually through the centuries, and as years go by more and more people are turning their leisure hours to the creation, care and appreciation of these living works of art.

It is unique in the gardening world, as in no other garden hobby does the grower become so fond of their trees, or put so much of themselves into them. They soon become like additional members to the family.

Bonsai as been described as horticulture in its highest and most refined form. It is an art form in which the work is never completed due to the fact that it is alive and growing constantly. You do not endeavour to stop the growth of trees but direct their growth the same way as you would train trees and bushes to form a hedge in a normal garden.

To the bonsai grower time can be a friend, as year by year their artisti creations become more refined , and signs of age bring added beauty to the trees design. Also in this age of synthetic materials, mass production, disposable goods and speedmost people long for some closer contact with nature.

With bonsai you can lose yourself in a dense forest, feel exhilarated at the sight of a tree cascading over a sheer ravine, or appreciate a single aged tree for its individual beauty. All in an area of one or two square feet. In short, it would be hard to find a hobby as fascinating as this ancient art of bonsai. Bonsai today is not just an Eastern experience, it is an art form practised world-wide.

The actual history of bonsai remains somewhat uncertain and imprecise. Archaeologists in Egypt discovered forms of Bonsai in tombs dating back to 4000 B.C. with excellently preserved carvings and paintings of potted trees: these trees have been easily identified as their native citrus trees, oranges, lemons, limes, kumquats etc. The Romans in the first century invented Topiary - the art of pruning trees or shrubs into fancy shapes. The Hindus developed the science of dwarfing trees. At one time the Hindu nation covered vast areas of the earth and because of extreme climatic conditions they were nomadic so would arry the various trees they used for medication purposes with them in pots. They would make use of the roots, flowers, bark, leaves and fruit.

Bonsai first appeared in China about 200 A.D. where it was known as Pensai or Penjing. It was a rough and rugged form. The trees had been collected from the mountains where they had

been dwarfed by extreme seasonal conditions mostly into unusual and contorted shapes. These were usually only owned by rich people.

About 1100 to 1300 A.D. Buddhism was rapidly spreading throughout Asia. It was about this time that Buddhist Monks from Korea introduced Bonsai into Japan. Overtime the simple trees were not just confined to the Monks and their Monasteries, but also later were introduced to be representative of the aristocracy. A symbol of prestige and honour, the ideals and philosophy of Bonsai were greatly changed over the years.

For the Japanese, Bonsai represents a fusion of strong ancient beliefs with the Eastern philosophies of the harmony between Man, the Soul and Nature. By the 14th Century Bonsai was indeed viewed as a highly refined art form. Bonsai were brought indoors for display at special times by the Japanese elite and became an important part of Japanese life. These complex trees were no longer permanently reserved for outside display. Although the practises of training and pruning did not develop until later. The small trees at this time were still collected from the wild.

In the 17th and 18th centuries Japanese Art reached their peak and were regarded very highly. Bonsai again evolved to a much higher understanding and refinement of nature although the pots used were deeper than the ones used today. The main factor in maintaining Bonsai was now the removal of all but the most important parts of the tree. At around this time Bonsai became common place to the general Japanese public which greatly increased the demand for the small trees collected from the wild and firmly established the art form within the culture and traditions of the country.

Overtime Bonsai began to take on different styles each of which varied immensely from one another. Finally in the mid 19th Century after more than 230 years of global isolation Japan opened itself up to the rest of the world. Word soon spread from travellers who visited Japan of the miniature trees in ceramic containers which mimicked aged mature tall trees in nature.

Exhibitions were held in London, Paris and Vienna in early 1900's with the phenomenal upsurge in the demand for Bonsai. The now widely expanding industry and the lack of naturally formed stunted trees led to the commercial production of Bonsai by artists through training young trees to grow to look like Bonsai.

Several basic styles were adopted and artists made use of wire and growing techniques to do this allowing the art to evolve even further. The Japanese learnt to capitalise on the interest in Bonsai very quickly opening up nurseries dedicated solely to grow, train and export bonsai trees.

Bonsai has now evolved to reflect changing tastes and times with a great variety of countries, cultures and conditions in which it is now practised. The evolution of Bonsai over the past two centuries is truly amazing, now a well known and respected horticultural art form that has spread throughout the world. From Greenland to America to South Africa to Australia. It is constantly changing and reaching even greater heights, representative of how small the world is really getting.

OBTAINING TREE MATERIAL FOR BONSAI

Collect trees from the wild that are small to large. from gardens and nurseries.

Large trees Cut down - cedar, Moreton bay, English elm

Dug Up Clump style

Grow from Seed/Figs, Mugho Pine, Oak, Pomegranate.

Advantage - control over branching, root system, develop buttress trunks, figs

Disadvantage - very slow, years to flower or fruit

Cuttings/ Royena, Corky Bark, Chinese Elm, Hawthorn.

Advantages - Same characteristics as parent tree will flower or fruit, same leaves and fibrous root system. **Disadvantage** - no taper.

Root cuttings - Beech, all elms, zelkova and liquid ambers.

Suckers English elms, liquid ambersquinces.

Aerial Laying shapes, thick trunks, clump styles, fruiting and flowering. Most trees can be done.

Ginkgo, Sergeants Juniper

Ground layering wisteria, flowering quince

Grafting Roman Empire/1000 B.C. Perfected by Chinese: fruit trees, exotic Maples. Japanese 5 Needle Pine onto Black Pine.

Fruiting and Flowering Trees. Over 40 species Azaleas, crab apples, pomegranate, prunus kumquat (small flowers and fruit)

Climbing Plants Lonicera, wisteria, bougainvillea

Natives 12 main species/melaleuca, Banksia varieties, callistemon, leptospermums, ficus.

Styles

Formal upright, Informal upright (more common and easier), Slanting, Semi Cascade (Flat - 30 degrees), Full Cascade (30-90 degrees), 20 plus other styles. (Asymmetric triangle/triangles).

Pots

Picture frame/Conifers, unglazed.

Fruiting/Flowering/unglazed to compliment or deciduous autumn leaves

Length of pot two thirds height of the tree - **Depth** diameter of the trunk.

Deep pot moisture loving trees/ willow, crepe myrtles, wisteria, alders, fruiting and flowering

Soil mix fertilizing and pot preparation

Repotting root pruning spring and autumn

Branch replacement guidelines - compromise what you want and what the tree will allow.

Shaping

Wiring (Lingnan) clip and grow

Position Watering. Defoliation.

Tools Buy best tools, extra money worth it in the long run.

Undue importance is put on the age of the tree. It is not a pre-requisite. To create the illusion of age is the art and they are to be admired for their beauty.

Owen Griffin Member Profile - currently recuperating at Grace McKellar in Geelong.

Owen Griffin first became interested in Bonsai in 1967 when on a visit to Warbuton he noticed a book about Bonsai in a shop window entitled 'The Art of Bonsai – step by step photo instructions by P G Moore in collaboration with Pat Weetman of New Idea and published by Southdown Press. Mr. Moore of Heidelberg had been growing Bonsai for about ten years. During the war he met a Japanese interpreter Mr. Nazum who he met again in Melbourne after the war who was instrumental in interesting Mr. Moore in the art of growing Bonsai. He trained and has a collection of more than 150 Bonsai and the pictures in the book were taken in his home. (Information & pictures from this book will be used in forthcoming newsletters)

Owen also has a Women's Weekly February 1965 eight page supplement which again information & pictures from this book will be used in forthcoming newsletters.

Some of the boys at the end of the war went to Japan and saw bonsai there – unfortunately I didn't go as I was too homesick and wanted to get home as soon as I could. Grew up on a market garden and always a gardener.

Owen bought two plants at a nursery whilst in Warbuton to have a go at doing Bonsai and in 1968 got a little New Zealand Christmas Tree (*Metrosideros Excelsa*) which he still has to this day Over the years Owen has had up to 100 trees and unfortunately these days only has twenty. Lost them all for one reason or another – nonetheless a valuable learning experience. In 1970 he got three Melbourne phone numbers of Bonsai enthusiasts from the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria to ask questions and learn. Like Bob White, in 1990 he received the John Pascoe Fawcner Medal in 1990, the highest individual honour bestowed on its members by the Royal.

Late 1979 Owen (The Club's first President for nine years) and five others got together to start a Bonsai Club which was the beginnings of our Club. They were Peter & Bev Mueller (Peter was the club's first secretary), Joy Tucker, Dawn ? and Bob Knight.

Owen arranged in 1980 with the Geelong Orchid Club to hold meetings at the same time in a small room in the Ambulance Room near St Mary's and the first Show was held on Saturday 31, 1981 from 11am till 6pm in the TPI Ex-Servicemen's Hall 161 Myers Street as part of the Springding Cultural Events. Admission \$2 & \$1 for pensioners /students. In those days a half page article in the Geelong Advertiser on Thursday 29th to promote the event free of charge was the norm and sadly not anymore. To ensure its success Owen had 400 complimentary tickets printed and distributed to places of employment handing parcels of tickets and posters hung in staff tea rooms. Almost all these people who attended bought raffle tickets which was how the club built up its finances as well as sales of trees at the show.

The 10th anniversary of our show was called Bonsai Expo 91

A major initiative in promoting the club was giving talks at every garden & orchid group, church groups & the three Grace McKellar Centres primarily done by Owen. He also used get time slots on 3MP before the show and in 2007 and 2008 on local radio, The Pulse. He had a bonsai radio program on the community radio station Country FM which he did for twelve months and was aborted when the station went completely music.

In 1985 went to a Pelargonium Society meeting and was fascinated by the first geranium bonsai he saw and still is to this day with some still in his collection.

In the mid 80's ran an eight week course teaching Bonsai in Lara

Some key Club dates:

Started in 1980

Registered with Corporate Affairs 20th May 1984 Registration # A2342S

Bank account opened 30th February 1980

1980 – 1988 Owen first president, second president Andy Hansen (1989-1993) then Bob White (1994-2000), Matthew Watson (2001-200), Wayne Miller (2005-2006) and Maxine Edgar (2007- 20xx)

and now Maxine Edgar. Owen stayed on the committee until 1994 and in 1990 was made a life member of the club.

Questions

Which tree do you specialise in? – Australian Natives in particular Kunzea, common name Kunzea.

What special moments have you had in Bonsai?..seeing the Club progressing so well which gives me a real buzz

what is the most important piece of information given you when you began doing Bonsai?...being at a Tommy Yamamoto workshop demonstrating how much wire to put on a tree

favourite bonsai style....group & Saikei

what's the smartest Bonsai thing you have been told?Discover why your tree has died as it's the best way to learn

what message do you have for people getting involved in Bonsai?.. the importance of watering, 90% of trees that die do so because have not has enough water, they can also die with too much water and learn ALL the functions of a tree from the roots up

my most humiliating bonsai moment was...giving a talk on azaleas working on a participants tee emphasizing the importance of being careful as the branches easily break and promptly broke a major branch, Fortunately she had a sense of humour and said seeing the look on my face was due compensation

my most humiliating moment was....In the war was wireless telegraphist in the RAAF and after discharge was at a party at a girl friends place when the wireless stopped working. Everyone said you can fix it Owen which I did even though all I did was fiddle with some wires. It promptly started again and was congratulated until very soon after the music stopped again

I don't like talking about...other people

I'm very bad at...anything to do with IT technology

my greatest fear is...don't think about fear

the hardest thing I have ever done is...work as a builders labourer just after the war

I am happiest when... *I have finished job well done like today putting trellis up on the back fence*

I often wonder.....*haven't got the time to wonder, am too busy*

favourite food.... *apple pie*

favourite music..... *country especially Johnny Cash & June Carter*

favourite movie....*Pride & Prejudice*

favourite drink.... *Scotch & dry*

favourite footy team....*Began barracking for South Melbourne in 1936 and then switched to Geelong when he became the returning officer for the Geelong Football Club. Owen retired as a Commonwealth Electoral Officer in 1981*

Bonsai Happenings for the Diary

**31st AABC Australian National Bonsai Convention July 20-23
Mantra Bell City Hotel, 215 Bell Street, Preston**

Dear all Victorian Bonsai clubs

The 2018 AABC bonsai convention registrations close on 1 July 2018. We have been working tirelessly to put together a great event to be hosted in our own state with all Victorian demonstrators (apart for the amazing Bjorn) and with some of the BEST bonsai from across Victoria to be displayed in the exhibition.

Thank you for the promoting you are doing in your clubs and in your newsletters. Just a final request to please continue to strongly encourage all your club members to register for the convention, which will not only be incredible, but also show the rest of Australia how strong, united and supporting all Victorians are of the bonsai scene and culture we have in our state. We have a great event planned and the demonstration material is very impressive. The only chance people will get to see the demonstrations is in person as there won't be any recording of the event.

Lets show the rest of Australia how amazing the bonsai culture is in Victoria.
Thank you for your time and support.

David Nassar

President Bonsai Northwest Inc Melbourne
Chairman 2018 AABC Bonsai Convention

The South Australian Bonsai Society Inc Bonsai Exhibition 6th-7th October 2018

Annual Show open 10.00am to 4.00 pm both days Admission: \$4.00 for Adults-Children under supervision Free. Goodwood Community Centre, 32 Rosa Street Goodwood, behind the Goodwood Library

Bonsai Society of Victoria Inc. 14th –15th October 2108 exclusively presents workshops & demonstrations

Ballarat Bonsai Society Annual Exhibition on 3-4th November 2018

**GBC Annual Show Masonic Hall, Regent Street, Belmont. 10th-11th
November 2018**

A magnificent display of Bonsai and a well stocked trading table that offers Bonsai requisites for sale, including pots, tools, wire, books including trained and semi-trained Bonsai and nursery stock. Continuous demonstrations of shaping and re-potting of bonsai each day. Meet and talk with Geelong's top Bonsai exponents. Light refreshments available.

BONSAI ACTION FOR JULY

Winter is the time we sit back and enjoy the intricate tracery of deciduous trees, contemplate and plan the changes we need to make to improve all our trees

- During the winter months, cut back on the watering of all your trees to ensure they do not stay wet all the time.
- Ensure that tropical trees and plants that need protection from the Frost or ice are under cover or inside. (Ficus, Bougainvillea, etc)
- Winter is the time for Heavy Pruning, Wiring and [Needle plucking](#) of Pines.
- Repotting of deciduous trees late winter as buds begin to swell in preparation of the new spring growth.

buds look for dormant ones to use for better shape
moss look for mosses to collect; keep in trays or dry on paper in pizza boxes
other list spring repotting tasks; prioritise to do vital first; sharpen tools
potting unblock drainage holes with hose or toothbrush
pots order pots for spring planting
prune deciduous severely if shape is poor. Heavy pruning best done now
rocks check garden supply place if doing root over rock
shape deciduous trees. Look for dormant buds to prune back to; be severe if shape is poor
sun conifers, evergreens, deciduous - leave out in open elements for sturdy growth
water perhaps twice a week if no heavy wind - check your trees' needs
wire deciduous trees; branches pliable and view clear; dry for 2 days before. Group wired trees together for easy checking

Winter is the slow-down time of year in the cold temperate zones; too cold outside. Warm temperate where the winters are more kind to some, there is a lot that can be achieved. The usual advice is to clean & tidy the Bonsai, especially remove the fallen foliage. Sharpen tools & weed and clean etc. But it is also the time to assess your progress & plan your direction. It's pleasant to bring into a sheltered, warm spot a bonsai at night after work, and 'fiddle' with it. Having removed excess foliage one can more unhurriedly easily assess its next step I think it's also a good idea to go over the winter tips, the details were mentioned previously. Japanese Maples are better pruned & trimmed before the middle of July. Pines & Conifers should have the foliage & twigs removed back towards the trunk. Deciduous trees painted or sprayed with lime sulphur. 10 water to 1 L.S. Remove from the surface slime & liverwort if not repotting perhaps wash away the surface & replace with you fresh mix. Wire at the start of winter rather than later.

If you have many Deciduous trees, you can start [Repotting](#) and [root prune](#) now with the trees that experience early dormancy. Just ensure the Roots and soil do not stay wet thru the winter causing [root rot](#). [Wire](#) your trees (all species) at this time so that it can be left on as long as possible. While the trees are not actively growing the wire will not cut in and scar the tree. Start planning your Spring Repotting Schedule. ensure you have sufficient potting mix and pots on hand for Spring.

Now that winter has arrived, the time for autumn potting has finished. The reason for this is that new feeder roots need warmth to develop and so with the onset of cold weather the possibility of root-rot occurs. What then CAN be done in these cooler months? Most of us, I think, have many bonsai jobs that we have put aside due to the pressures in the busier seasons Now is the time to catch up on these.

Firstly, autumn to winter is an excellent time to shape your trees. Deciduous trees, in particular, are best shaped at this time as we can observe their structure and form without any leaves to

obscure it. It is a very good time for wiring also. Again, for deciduous trees, access is easier. In the books, you may read that winter makes the wood more brittle and thus easier to break. This is true - if you live in a very cold area. If winters are mild, the problem is not so great, but to be on the safe side let your trees be in a dryish condition at the time of wiring. The cells of the tree are thus so swollen and breakages are not so easy. In the cooler months, because of the absence of more pressing jobs, one can go rock collecting (for use in rock-settings saikei or as viewing stones), spend more time in making the outdoor display more attractive and perhaps in rearranging trees. From the horticultural point of view, it is advisable to place tender trees in a more sunny position.

However, most trees would benefit by having more sun during the winter months (this promotes better bud development and healthier growth in spring). Frequently, problems associated with watering arise in the winter months. Often people get into a habit of watering at a particular time during the summer months and do not vary this even when the cooler period begins. The result is that trees are being re-watered while still damp - thus giving the chance for root-rot to set in.

JULY PLANT PROFILE

Olea europaea ssp. Oleaster

Originating possibly from Asia Minor, it has for centuries been found throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and the Mediterranean areas, where ever the temperature remains above 18 degrees F (-8 degrees C). The olive is a medium sized evergreen tree or shrub with a spreading often twisted base. It bears opposite oval leathery leaves which are glossy dark green above and silvery green below. The small flowers, in axillary clusters, are greenish white and the fruits a violet black when ripe. There are many cultivated species of olive but the original wild form (subspecies oleaster) has smaller leaves and the fruits contain less oil. The light grey bark becomes knarled on old trees.

Position:- In regions with mild winters it can be grown in full sun, but protect from winter frosts. It needs a warm location with a minimum temperature of 7 degrees C (45 degrees F).

Feeding: - Every 2 weeks from early spring until autumn.

Watering: - Daily from spring to late autumn. Weekly in winter but keep moist at all times. Never let the soil dry out completely. Be particularly careful to keep moist when in fruit, as lack of water when fruit is forming will cause the fruit to shrivel and drop.

Repotting:- Every 2 to 3 years in spring with a mixture of 60% good quality potting mix and 40% coarse sand or equivalent material.

Pruning and Wiring:- Positional pruning of the roots should be carried out at the same time as repotting. Remove all the leaves during repotting and get rid of any branches unnecessary for the final design. Always establish the basic shape while young as branches are brittle and harden quickly. Prune the foliage to shape during the growing season, shortening the new shoots to 2 to 4 leaves.

Wire to position the trunk and branches from spring to autumn, the year after repotting. Keep a careful watch and remove it before it starts to cut into the bark. Selectively remove excess fruit in autumn in order not to wear out the plant and to improve the aesthetic effect of the tree.

Propagation:- From seed sown fresh in late autumn. By cuttings rooted in sharp sand.

BONSAI TIP OF THE MONTH

So what do you need in practical terms to start growing Bonsai?

1. A basic understanding that what you are doing is growing a tree in a pot. It is a normal tree sharing the same genes as a full sized example of the same species. There is no such thing as a Bonsai tree. Nor are there special seeds for Bonsai. It is the skills and techniques applied by you that will determine to what extent your tree remains a perfect miniature work of art.
2. A critical eye is useful. Sometimes it is a curse. I tend to be a perfectionist when working on trees but this is not a bad thing as it is this search for perfection that maintains my interest
3. Time. If you are not willing or able to tend to your trees' basic needs on a regular basis then Bonsai is not the hobby for you. Having said that, there are ways around many of the everyday problems caused by other commitments. What is essential is your dedication to make sure these measures are in place if required
4. A place to keep your trees. The majority of trees sold to the general public are intended to be kept indoors while the vast majority of trees grown by Bonsai enthusiasts are grown outdoors. This highlights the gap in understanding between the two. Let us compromise. If you have come into Bonsai through the acquisition of a mass-produced, off the shelf tree or you simply don't have a garden then you may want to grow just indoor trees. Bear in mind that there are only so many places in a house where trees can be successfully grown before other members of the household lose patience. Be realistic about what you can do based on your situation. It is possible and widely practiced, especially in America it seems, to grow trees under artificial lighting. This is an option worth considering but does involve a hefty initial outlay. Window-sills will suffice if you bear in mind that light only comes from one side and a plant that is tropical in nature will not appreciate being exposed to draughts or shut behind curtains. A conservatory would be a better place to keep indoor trees, but since most truly indoor trees are tropical in their requirements then heating would be required through the winter that might work out expensive. Alternatively the same unheated conservatory, provided it is well ventilated and shaded during the summer, can be used to grow outdoor species thus widening the options greatly. This choice is widened still further if space is available outside and the protection of a cold greenhouse or other custom built structure that is open but not exposed to the elements will provide what I consider to be the ideal conditions for most trees.
5. A club. If you are serious about Bonsai, then the advice and support offered by one of the many clubs scattered around the country will be invaluable. We have already seen the gulf between the service offered to the public and that required for the more serious. A decent club will fill that gap as will a visit to a reputable Bonsai nursery. By reputable I mean one that puts the further advancement of the hobby on the same level or above making a generous living
6. Patience. The greatest gift you can possess when starting out in Bonsai is patience. Trees need time to do what they do naturally. Forcing nature to rush things will only end in disappointment. Knowing how far is too far when working on a tree is something that can only come with experience
7. Trees. One of the myths about Bonsai is that you have to start from seed. This is not the case. On the other hand you definitely do not need to and categorically should not go out and spend money on the most expensive tree you can find. Firstly, growing from seed, whilst it is a feasible method of propagating new material is a long term project. It will be at least five years before you have anything substantial with which to work. What you need is something to practice techniques on. At the same time it should have some potential for making good Bonsai. There are a number of options. Your local garden centre or nursery is a good place to look. Avoid the Bonsai section. This is not what we're looking for. Head for the conifer section and find a nice bushy Juniper, Cedar or

8. Yew. Look for a decent trunk base, some sort of taper as the trunk goes up or plenty of choice of side branches that might be bought up to form a new apex. Avoid hedging conifers, these are not suitable. Alternatively, you might find something already growing in the borders at home. Many traditional shrubs such as Fuchsia, Cotoneaster, Privet, Ceanothus, Pyracantha and Berberis can be used successfully. Whatever your choice, you now have your first tree. If it's not what you think of as Bonsai, then this is the first lesson concluded. Now comes the exciting bit.
9. Pots. You don't need to go out and buy expensive pots. Trees in the training phases will grow in exactly the same way in seed trays, plant pots or washing up bowls. Only spend money on an expensive pot if and when the tree justifies it. As the choice of pot is a critical part of the finished work, this is not something to be rushed into. There is a compromise between the two extremes. Low priced Korean and Chinese pots look the part and make you feel like you're getting somewhere and Mica, a very dense plastic, is an ideal material for training trees in.
10. Tools. A few years ago I would have advised against buying Chinese tools. However, times have changed and the good quality tools now being imported from China are ideal for beginners. Ultra cheap tools are still available, so be wary. On the other hand, if you are serious then, invest in quality Japanese tools. If you're not sure, then a good pair of kitchen scissors will be a good start until you get hooked. Then you can invest in the right tools for your level of commitment
11. Compost. If you are repotting things at this early stage, it can be bewildering the amount of different soil mixes that are used. A tried and tested formula for beginners and old hands alike is a mixture of fine grit (2-3mm) and sieved peat (or multipurpose potting compost) in equal volumes. I like to add an equal volume of Danish pink cat litter also. That's enough to get you started. If you have any other questions or simply want to know more, drop me a line.

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH

Edmund Burke (1729–1797) Irish philosopher and statesman. "I attribute my success to this: I **never gave or took an excuse.**"

WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

Bonsai Empire.com



On this website we share information about Bonsai tree care. For background information (styles, history) check the "Origin of Bonsai" section and for techniques check "the Basics" section. A year ago we decided to start the big project of shooting a series of short, but inspirational Bonsai movies. To celebrate the completion of the project, we created one movie with all the best footage. Sit back, relax and get inspired by seven minutes of Bonsai Masterpieces!

BONSAI NURSERY OF THE MONTH

Growers of Pre Bonsai and Bonsai Starters

Shibui Bonsai, a small nursery based at Yackandandah in North East Victoria, grows and develops a range of species to provide high quality pre bonsai and starter trees. Neil has over 30 years of experience growing bonsai and has been growing field grown pre-bonsai material for the past 25. At Shibui Bonsai our emphasis is on developing trees with the best potential.

We carefully rootprune at each repotting to encourage lateral roots spread as the first stage of developing bonsai with great nebari. Regular pruning in the field and in the nursery builds trees with taper and dynamic trunk movement.



Our main emphasis has been on growing and supplying traditional bonsai favourites such as Trident and Japanese maples, Chinese elms, Black pines and Shimpaku juniper but we also grow smaller numbers of other species with potential as bonsai. More recently we have been growing small numbers of Australian native trees, many of which are proving quite adaptable to bonsai.

Some of you may have seen our trees for sale at major bonsai shows and events. We will continue to bring great stock to you when we can, but for those who just can't wait and those from areas we don't get to, Shibui Bonsai is open by appointment only. So to avoid disappointment, please contact us before making the trip. Group visits from Bonsai clubs are most welcome.....

For those who are not able to get to the nursery we can pack and post trees to most eastern states of Australia. <http://shibuibonsai.com.au/>, neil@shibuibonsai.com.au PO Box 135 Yackandandah 3749 Ph: 0260271557

BONSAI TRIVIA OF THE MONTH

Not really Trivia - maybe it is for those not into carving!

Carving with a Dremel - By Lee Wright

I'm not a carving nut and I do not have a workshop so I don't want a lot of equipment. While I would prefer a tool a bit more powerful than a Dremel, I'm not doing huge trees and it will have to suit.

I've done carving in the past but very unsatisfactorily. Like all sports, practice is the essence and since I don't have a large selection of carveable trees, practice is limited. March 2005 I brought home an Agnosis flexuosis. It didn't take long before I realised this tree was harbouring ants, thousands of them. In a 2.5 day marathon I eradicated them all and a large portion of the trunk, now not just beautifully hollow, but 2/3rds carved by masters.

I set out to duplicate their work in the top third that they had not ravaged. It took three sessions but I honestly believe that anyone would be hard put to say where the ants left off and I started. Bolstered with that experience, I worked on two pyracanthas. One had a large and ugly jin and it now has a smaller, quite attractive jin and a large double hollow completely through the belly of the trunk. The job exceeded my expectations of my abilities. Again, three sessions to do it and refine it but there is no rule that says you have to do it all at once. Better to take it slowly. I worked with the new knowledge of how ants tunnel and I think they would smile on my work.

My very first bonsai was an incredibly ugly elm that only familiarization with stock plant selection showed how wrong this choice was. With nothing to lose I removed two of the 3 large branches emanating from one point. The resulting large scar was elongated several years later to run in a curving path down the trunk. My carving job was crass, shallow, amateurish and ugly and by now the tree had gained some grace and elegance and promised to be nice.

So, with my new found confidence and experience, I started to refine this tree. And you know what... it's easy! Follow the ants' golden rules:

- Never tunnel in a straight line, or solely in one direction – you may be right or left handed but ants aren't
- Hold the Dremel so the dirt doesn't blow in your face and ALWAYS wear eye protection
- Invest in at least one of the tungsten bits – The \$50 cost is well worth it
- Keep your coffee away from the fall out.
- Use pliers to tighten the bits so they don't spin out

- Olive and elm are quite hard, the Dremel will handle them but slowly and carefully. The extra time spent working more slowly with hardwoods saves the Dremel from burning out.
- Ants don't carve tunnels in the shape of your bit, modify the grooves so they look natural.
- That's the key to success... your work MUST look natural
- When you are carving you will quickly know which tree has soft wood and which has hard... don't do too much fine refining on softwood as it will deteriorate more quickly.
- Use the edge of your bit to remove any wood curls and unnatural looking or sharp edges of carving. You can invest in a Caramel Burner but I don't have \$50+ to spare for a very occasional tool so I try to do mine on the cheap. Care is the secret to success.
- Branches will get in the way (constantly), don't break them
- Make sure all carving has a drainage path so water does not stand in the wood to minimise rotting
- As you carve think how water would run down the carving and leach it out and exaggerate your hollows and tunnels in that way
- Ants excavate hollows to build nests so make some deeper indentations in appropriate places to mimic this.
- Take great care around branches so you don't damage the cambium from the inside.
- You can hollow out branch scars but watch their location so they don't end up looking like portholes.
- Less is more so don't overdo your work. This is another reason to carve a tree in several sessions so you can have time to sit and study what you have done and what you might want to do and how it will look in the end.
- Don't just do shallow carving. Carving needs depth and shadow to reflect reality.
- Never carve a newly repotted tree. Carving generates a lot of pressure and the roots have to be solid in the pot to ensure they do not suffer. If you want to do the two at once, carve first and then repot. But then your refining will have to wait. It is really better to allow a newly repotted tree to solidly establish itself before carving it.

I have never gotten a tree simply to carve. I have used carving to beautify a natural defect or emphasis a feature [or got carried away with a possibility]. If you are serious about working with bonsai a talent for carving is reasonably necessary. You could get a healthy looking entire tree like my zigzag pyracantha and then discover that 50% of the trunk is rotten - not as a hollow centre, but sliced straight down the middle... one side good, one side gone. Carving was essential to make the area presentable and since the tree, necessarily totally restyled to compensate, has character and potential... it was important to do a good job.

Carving and deadwood has pitfalls. It is HIGHLY recommended NEVER to take carving to the soil line as the moisture will move up and rot the deadwood. Also, when you lime sulphur to protect the deadwood, getting the chemical in the soil around the roots can prove deadly to the tree. My zigzag pyracantha has deadwood all the way down.. a lot of it.

The tree won't live forever, but while it does I can enjoy it.

Once your carving is finished it is important to let the tree stand for several months to let any damaged cambium on the edges heal so applications of lime sulphur are not absorbed into the living tissue. If the area surrounding your deadwood is already calloused you can lime sulphur immediately.

The first step is to spray the deadwood with water several times over half an hour period to allow the water to soak into the timber. This stops the lime sulphur from colouring the wood orange. It will be yellowish when you apply but go grey quickly. If you apply lime sulphur to dry wood the wood will age to grey over the months. I find there's another good reason to moisten the deadwood first. Lime sulphur is as runny as water and you do not want to get it on the cambium or in the soil. Damp wood seems to absorb better and as long as you are careful in your application, it does not run so badly.

I keep a rag at the base of the trunk or hold it at the base of a jin to prevent the lime sulphur from getting on the live wood. Lime sulphur is applied full strength when you are treating deadwood. It is applied 1 to 20 when you are spraying deciduous trees in the winter to kill pests

lodged in the bark and buds. Never apply lime sulphur full strength to a living tree and don't waste your time applying watered down lime sulphur to protect deadwood.

If your game is large bonsai then you have to get more powerful equipment to get the work done in reasonable time but if you are into smaller bonsai a Dremel can do quite a good job on small to medium size trees. Good luck!

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HOUSEKEEPING

Meeting setup/tidy-up

The hall will be open from about 7pm to set up tables and chairs. As is the case for each of our meetings, extra hands to help set up are always welcome, as is help appreciated at the end of each meeting to pack away afterwards. Those who regularly assist would very much be pleased if more of us lent a hand.

GENERAL BUSINESS

GBC Website

Nathan Rhook has taken over managing our website and all things social Media from Daniel Novakovic. A sincere thanks to Daniel for all he has done getting our club's profile into the Content will always be the challenge and please submit relevant information to Nathan. Go to www.bonsai.org.au

SALES ORDER FORM

There is no commission to pay the club for workshop night sales

One needs to be financial to do so.

Commission still applicable during the show.

GBC Library

An extensive library of bonsai books, magazines/journals, DVDs are available (as part of membership benefits) for use by members. Borrowed items must be returned in the month following their removal for loan. Non-financial members aren't eligible to borrow from the library and borrowing privileges may be revoked for members who do not respect the borrowing process. See John and Steph Dearnly our Librarians

Memberships

Due annually at our December Annual General Meeting

Banking Details/Geelong Bonsai Club BSB/633000 Account Number 152 895 694

Please renew now - membership form is attached

Individual \$20.00

Family \$30.00

Students & Pensioners \$15.00

Meeting setup/tidy-up

The hall will be open from about 7.15 pm to set up tables and chairs. As is the case for each of our meetings, extra hands to help set up are always welcome, as is help appreciated at the end of each meeting to pack away afterwards. Those who regularly assist would very much be pleased if more of us lent a hand.

Meeting/Events Calendar & Agenda

A copy is available at the meetings and is enclosed in this newsletter.

Calendar & How the Show Bench Works?

Each month there will be a "Tree of the Month", 'Style of the Month' and 'Your Choice' and this can be any style. Detailed notes sheet is available from the Club, and copies will be provided at the meetings

Wearing of Badges

Reminder to please wear your badge at our meetings.

It is a requirement to be able to claim the door prize if you are the winner.

Mentors:-

If any club member would like to volunteer their time as a mentor to other club members, please put your name down on the mentors list at the next meeting. Likewise if any club member would like to have the help of another person outside of club meetings.

Our Committee: Sieglinde Jobson, Karen Van Der Lee, Graeme Kelleher, Mark Tevan, Phil Wall, Paul Buttigieg & Nathan Rhook.



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Meetings are held at Grovedale United Services Memorial Hall, Reserve Road Grovedale at 8pm on 2nd Monday of the month. No meeting in January. Meetings in 2012 on the second Monday of the month except November which is the first Monday because of the show.

Geelong Bonsai Club Inc. PO Box 1175 Geelong VIC 3220 Registration No: A0001342S

2018 EVENTS CALENDER

Day	Date	Program
Monday	12-Feb	General Meeting – 3 Ninja's Demonstration
Saturday	17-Feb	Free Batesford workshop
Monday	12 March (Labour Day)	General Meeting – Workshop
Saturday	17-March	Workshop – Joe Morgan-Payler
Monday	9-April	General Meeting – Demonstration/Mark Ludlow/ Master Apprentices Bonsai School and Nursery
Saturday	28-April	Free Batesford workshop
Tuesday	8-May	Committee Meeting
Monday	14-May	General Meeting – Workshop
Sunday	27-May	Nursery Crawl
Monday	11 June (Queens Birthday)	General Meeting – Workshop
Sunday	24-Jun	Dig
Tuesday	3-July	Committee Meeting
Monday	9-July	General Meeting – Demonstration/Tien Liao-Bonsai Sensation
Sunday	22-July	Nursery Crawl
Saturday	28-July	Free Batesford workshop
Saturday	4-August	Workshop - Joe Morgan-Payler
Monday	13-August	General Meeting – Demonstration Quentin Valentine
Monday	10-Sep	General Meeting – Demonstration/Trevor Wicks
Tuesday	18-Sep	Committee Meeting
Saturday	22-Sep	Workshop - Quentin Valentine
Monday	8-Oct	General Meeting – Workshop
Sunday	14-Oct	Nursery Crawl
Saturday	20-Oct	Workshop - Joe Morgan-Payler
Monday	5-Nov	General Meeting - Show Workshop
Sat – Sun	10 – 11 November	BONSAI CLUB ANNUAL SHOW
Saturday	24-Nov	Free Batesford workshop
Tuesday	27-Nov	Committee Meeting
Monday	10-Dec	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (Critique/Christmas Pizza Party)

ANNUAL SHOW BENCH ACTIVITY

DATE	TREE OF THE MONTH	STYLE OF THE MONTH
February	Figs and Natives	Group Planting or Saikei
March	Elms	Raft or Clump
April	Cedars and Minis	Informal Upright
May	Autumn Foliage	Twin or Multi-trunk
June	Pines and Junipers	Full or semi cascade or Minis
July	Deciduous Species	Formal Upright
August	Any Evergreen	Windswept or slanting
September	Olives	Root over rock/rock planting
October	Flowering or Fruiting	Literati or Broom
November	Maples and Liquid Amber	Shari's – Jin's and Driftwood
December	C'site Leaves Ash/Wisteria	Your Choice (Anything)