

Albury Wodonga Bonsai newsletter- March 2015

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Fees have been set at \$20 per member or \$30 per couple for the coming year. You can pay Neil at a meeting or post subs to Neil at P.O. Box 135, Yackandandah, 3749

FEEES WILL BE DUE AFTER THE MARCH ANNUAL MEETING

PLEASE PROVIDE THE DETAILS ON THE RENEWAL FORM TO NEIL ASAP.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 24, 2015 at Harry's Hut,
Olive St. South Albury at 7:30 pm

For those who have not been before, Harry's Hut is the meeting room at the Gardens beside Brown's Lagoon. Entry off Olive st, opposite the end of Nurigong st, South Albury.

Topics: Annual meeting/ Displaying bonsai/ growing benches

Our annual meeting is pretty informal. If anyone feels able to take on a role that would take some pressure of the few of us who manage the club at the moment, we would love to have your help.

Display/ grow benches will be a round table discussion with everybody contributing ideas and asking questions. Bring along photos or plans or anything you have heard about.

Last Month:

Last month we talked about propagation in general and air layering in particular.

Bonsai can be started as seed, cuttings, collected trees, purchased stock or air layers.

Cuttings will root any time of year. With leaves on cuttings need high humidity so cover new cuttings with a plastic bag, cut-down plastic bottle or keep them in a plastic storage box with some water for humidity. Rooting 'hormone' will help roots grow. Some growers dip the base of

cuttings in honey or vegemite and claim good results. Pot cuttings into potting mix when roots show at the bottom of the pot.

Air layers are a way of starting a thicker stem. Layers also tend to produce a very good radial root system which will ultimately give a well developed nebari.

Choose a nice part of any tree then ringbark at the spot where you want roots. Wrap damp sphagnum moss around the wound then wrap the whole lot in plastic to retain moisture and hold it together. Many growers now tying copper wire around the peeled stem just below the bark to prevent the wound healing over to encourage better roots.

Air layers can also be wrapped with a split pot filled with potting mix as long as you can water it regularly. Drying out may cause the new roots to die.

Keep the layer damp but not flooded until sufficient roots have formed.

When there are enough roots the new plant can be separated from the parent plant. This may take 2-6 months or even longer depending on the species, time of year, health of parent and your technique. Layers will survive with very few roots.

A note of caution: many branches look good when you see them on a tree but lack taper and movement when you finally get the layer into a pot of its own. Look at lots and only layer the very best possibilities if you want a good bonsai from the layer.

Business: Annual general meeting

Bonsai Events:

Bendigo Bonsai Club Show April 4, 5, 6. Uniting Church Hall, Forest Street, Bendigo. Bendigo club have sent us some tickets so if you think you might like to have a look let me know and I can get these to you.

Mornington Peninsular Bonsai Club Show April 4, 5. Balcombe Grammar, 389 Nepean Hwy, Mt Martha.

The 4th Symposium on Australian Plants as Bonsai.

Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne.

Saturday April 11, Sunday April 12, 2015. Follow the link for more details.

<http://www.vicnativebonsai.com.au/p/blog-page.html>

28th Australian National Bonsai Convention

Friday 15 - Monday 18 May 2015,

Hotel Grand Chancellor Adelaide on Hindley, South Australia

Albury Wodonga events for the coming year:

I'm pretty sure most of those present at the last meeting agreed that the draft program be adopted. You will notice **WHO?**s after a few of the topics (May - pots; Aug - Soils; Sept - wisteria; Oct - Azaleas). We need members to step up and take responsibility for these nights. You may like to RESEARCH and present your findings or maybe just MODERATE the discussion that night. Let Neil know if you are brave enough to stand up and contribute.

January: Fig workshop. Start at 6:00 pm with dinner and drinks then work with fig species for the evening. Plenty of advice and demonstrations from experienced fig growers. - **Everyone**

February: Propagating and air layering - **Neil, Ian?**

March: Display bonsai, Bonsai benches/stands for your backyard, - **All**

April: Master class videos - **Wagga boys??**

May: Bonsai pots - how to choose the right one for your tree and where to get them - **Who??**
Also Club project trees and start new project trees for new members. - **Everyone**

June: Saikei - Miniature landscapes. Demo and workshop - **Neil????**

July: Workshop - with Joe Morgan-Payler???? - **Neil to organise**. Note that this has not been finalised yet. Swap another meeting topic if another month suits Joe.

August: Soils aint soils - **Who??**

September: Wisterias - Wisteria species and culture as bonsai - **Who??**

October: Azaleas as bonsai - **Who??**

Early November: possible olive dig? - **Neil to organise**

November: End of year social. BYO food and drinks.

Several other suggestions are on the list - hold for next year or substitute for any of the above???:

Flowering Cherries as bonsai'

Draw and photograph bonsai,

Visit to Ian's place: This could be additional to meeting nights if we can arrange a suitable day/time.

Seasonal Notes:

Have you noticed that the rain has stopped? I thought that the days were shorter and cooler enough to try once a day watering but the trees have disagreed and I'm back to watering each morning and night.

Maples are still growing a bit and I cut back some long shoots last week. Hoping that will be the last trimming this season because it is nearly autumn. The natives are still growing strongly so many of them, including the figs, still need trimming.

Whenever trees need watering and trimming they also need feeding so keep up with the fertilizer program. I have switched to a higher K fertilizer for flowers and fruit for any flowering and fruiting bonsai. Potash (K) is important for the reproductive cycle of plants so increased levels of K will help the plant produce more, better flowers next spring. Note that flower buds are initiated at this time of year, even though we cannot see them, and open next spring. This is only useful if your tree is mature enough to produce flowers. If a bonsai is still growing and developing, just keep up with the normal fertilizers to boost growth.

I also found some wires on trees here. Lucky that they were not yet making real scars on the trunks and branches. During autumn trees seem to thicken quicker than other seasons so if you have wired any trees please check wires and remove if they seem a bit tight. In most cases the branch or trunk will be set and doesn't need the wire any more anyway. Note it is safer to cut wires off than try to unwind them. Many growers have tried to unwind wires and found the branch in one hand and the tree in the other - be careful.

Autumn can be an opportunity to re-pot some bonsai. Although many overseas experts prefer spring repotting, I note that well respected Grant Bowie from Canberra has been leading pine workshops for their club and they have all just repotted their pines under his supervision. I have heard enough other experienced Australian bonsai growers also advocating autumn repotting for pines and other conifers to make it worth trying.

This little trident maple has grown so many roots this season that it has pushed itself up out of the pot. Usually this takes a few years but this one has managed it in just one season. It will definitely need repotting this year.



Members and visitors are always welcome to bring a tree (or 2 or even more) to our meetings if you want to show off your successes (or failures!), to work on a tree, or to ask about a problem.

If you can't get to a meeting (or even if you can) why not email Neil neil@shibuibonsai.com.au with a question or a comment or even a few photos to go in the newsletter? (does not have to be an overseas trip!)

Does anyone have anything to contribute for next month's

newsletter

Fees will be due at the annual meeting in March.

We also need to confirm members contact details to keep club records up to date. Please complete this membership details form and lodge it with your payment in March.

Name:

Postal address:

Telephone:

Email address:

Membership type: family

Individual

Concession