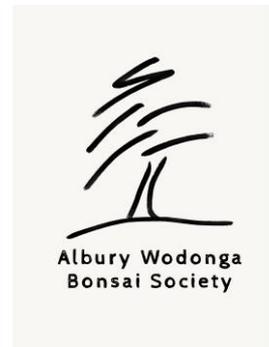


Albury Wodonga Bonsai Newsletter

March 2018



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Fees:

Fees have been set at \$25 per member or \$35 per couple for 2018. You can pay Theo at the meeting or make alternative arrangement with him.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, March 27, 2018 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.

Subs are due this month and if you are intending on paying at the meeting Theo will be there a little earlier to make sure it doesn't eat into our normal meeting time. Make sure you get paid up to take advantage of Joe Morgan-Payler's visit next month!!

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.

Topic for Next Meeting:

AGM: March is our annual meeting. It does not take long and you won't be pressured into taking on a committee role but we would really love some more people to help spread the load so please consider what you might be able to do for YOUR club.

Group workshop: Work with others to plan and design a bonsai using a tree supplied.

We've never done this before but we think it has potential and should stretch your imagination and planning skills. Neil will supply a range of trees to work with but if you have something you're willing to risk you're welcome to add something to the pool (if you supply a tree you'll get to take home whatever is left of it at the end of the evening). We will have a range of bonsai tools available but if a few people bring tools it should make it a bit easier for the groups to work on their trees.

Last Month:

Meredith did a lot of research and preparation to give us a great overview of everything a bonsai beginner needs to know. From bonsai care through tools and equipment to styling. Well done Meredith - some stuff even I have not heard before.

I'm looking forward to other members offering to research and present topics for us to learn from so who's next?

Bonsai Events:

Saturday March 31- Sunday April 1: Mornington Peninsular Bonsai Society Easter show, Balcombe Grammar, Mt Martha

Saturday March 31- Monday April 2: Bendigo Bonsai Society Easter exhibition Uniting Church hall, Forest st Bendigo

Saturday April 14-Sunday April 15: Victorian Native Bonsai Club exhibition Domain House, Dallas Brooks drive, Melbourne.

Saturday April 14-Sunday April 15: Nepean Bonsai Society show, Glenbrook Community Hall, Great Western Hwy. (Sydney)

Saturday April 21: Albury Wodonga Bonsai Society Visiting tutor, Joe Morgan-Payler

July 20-23, 2018: - 31st National Bonsai Convention, Melbourne. Bonsai North West has sent us details of next year's bonsai convention to be held at Mantra Bell City. Headline guest artist Bjorn Bjorholm along with a selected group of local bonsai artists doing workshops and demonstrations as well as a quality bonsai display and sales area.

BFA calendar of events: - <https://teamup.com/ks55bf2733e25865a6>

Business:

Visiting Tutor Program workshop/ demonstration

Joe Morgan-Payler has been booked for Saturday April 21. We will have a workshop in the morning, limited to 8 places only at around \$40 each. You can book places or get more info from Theo for this event. We are proposing that club members can observe the workshop at no charge but we'll ask \$5 for non-members who come for a look.

If we get enough demand we can run an afternoon workshop as above but if we don't have enough people for a second workshop we'll get Joe to do a 'CRITIQUE' of members' trees. This means you offer a bonsai or even a tree in training and Joe will talk about its good points, drawbacks, potential and offer suggestions on how to develop or improve the tree. This format should allow all members to get involved and go home with some practical good ideas for one or more of their trees.

This would cost \$10 each to attend to help cover Joe's fees.

It is probably worth outlining some guidelines for participating in workshops to help you get the best out of the experience. Here are some guidelines to help you, the other workshop participants and the tutor to get more out of the experience.

Take decent stock: If you present your visiting tutor with a thin seedling you will probably be told that it needs time to grow and develop - end of workshop and \$40 for you. Try to bring trees that at least have some branches so you and the tutor have the chance to discuss some options for the tree's development and you may even get to practice some pruning and/or wiring. Club meetings and club workshops are a more appropriate place to get advice on immature stock.

One tree or several? This is generally set out beforehand. If not, ask your organising group for clarification. If one tree (bonsai) is specified it may be acceptable to bring a couple and give your tutor the option of choosing one to work with for the workshop. Your organisers may allow you to work with more than one tree provided they are relatively undeveloped and can be assessed and completed quickly. Note that multiple trees for a group will still be considered as one bonsai.

Bring appropriate tools and equipment: You need to supply all your own materials unless specified otherwise. Bonsai tools or your alternatives and wire are probably a minimum, pots and potting mix if repotting might be an option, and if it is likely that more advanced bending or grafting might be suggested you may need to supply raffia or alternative binding, etc to be able to do this work. A bucket, bag or bin for soil and offcuts will help keep your area safer and tidy.

Prepare your tree(s): The first step in assessing material for bonsai is usually to check the roots so remove enough potting mix so that the surface roots are visible. Remove any redundant shoots - suckers from around the base, small shoots from around the base of branches (especially in junipers) so that it will be easier to see the branches and to wire the tree if necessary.

Be prepared to offer your thoughts and ideas about your tree but also be prepared to listen to your tutor, after all, you are paying for their expert opinion. Note that you are not obliged to accept anyone's opinion, even a visiting tutor. If you really don't like what is suggested be prepared to (diplomatically) say so. You should never go home with a tree you don't like.

Be tolerant: It takes time and effort for a visiting tutor to get round a group. Be prepared to wait your turn while he/she is concentrating on others in the workshop. Observing and listening to the advice being offered to the others can be really enlightening and is a good use of the time while you are waiting for your turn.

Help clean up afterward: Even though you may be excited or tired after your 3 hour session the room still needs to be cleaned and tidied. Please do your share before leaving.

Remember, the more you prepare and put in, the more you'll get out of the workshop.

Observers at a workshop: Observers are usually welcome at bonsai workshops but you must be prepared to be an observer. Offering advice is generally considered very bad manners. You may be able to assist someone with wiring, etc but please have the courtesy to allow the visiting tutor to offer the advice and suggestions.

Proposed 2018 program:

January 23: Figs and natives.

February 27: General bonsai maintenance - what to do and when?

March 27: Group workshop- small groups work cooperatively on one or more trees - prune, shape, etc (is anyone brave enough to offer one or more trees for this activity?)

April 24: Accent plants

May 22: Swap meet - buy, sell, swap or give away anything plant or bonsai related

June 26: Swamp cypress

July 24: Groups - forest style bonsai

August 28: Club workshop - bring a tree to work on, get advice or show others.

September 25:

October 23:

November 27:

December: No meeting due to proximity to Christmas

January 2018: Figs (and other natives)

You can see we still need something for Sept, Oct and Nov. What would you like to see and hear? What could you offer?

Seasonal Notes from Shibui Bonsai

Watering seems to always be on this list but I have noticed a reduced need for water over the last month. I've been missing the occasional morning watering because some trees are still quite wet from the night before.

I have stepped up the feeding though. Pines now have mature growth so they are getting fortnightly feed to build up strength for next spring. Flowering trees are getting high K fert every 2 weeks to boost flowers and fruit next spring and others are getting a general fortnightly liquid fertiliser to prepare for winter dormancy and subsequent spring growth.

Keep up with weeding. I know that it is not the most glamorous of bonsai jobs but getting those pests out of the pots before they seed will allow your trees to get their fair share of the fertiliser, light and water. Keeping ahead of them actually saves time in the long run so get out and weed this week!

March has become an accepted time of year to repot a range of trees. I think it is too late to do most natives in our climate but I'm told that conifers can be root pruned now and some experienced growers have even repotted deciduous trees at this time of year.

Bonsai Today magazine this quarter has a feature article on repotting different species. I was surprised that the author recommends repotting many species more often than traditionally suggested. It points out that a number of species have roots that grow fast and need more regular repotting to allow water to penetrate into the pot - Camellia, Stewartia, Corylopsis, Crepe Myrtle, Japanese Holly, Kumquat, Apple, persimmon and Flowering quince are mentioned as species with strong roots that need more regular repotting. I can add banksia to that list and recent conversations with a grower at Port Macquarrie indicate that oaks also do far better with more regular light root pruning than heavier cutting less frequently.

At the start of March I travelled up to Port Macquarie to demonstrate layering and grafting techniques for bonsai at their regular meeting and for a workshop in the afternoon. They had invited neighbouring club members to attend and we had a great day and created/improved some good bonsai. Thanks to Wauchope Bonsai

Workshop members for your invitation and great hospitality.

Photos:

above- members checking the workshop trees before the meeting

right - club display bench (theme for the month was natives)



Canberra Bonsai Society have invited me as guest presenter for their April meeting to discuss maples as bonsai followed by another afternoon workshop focussed on maples for 8 of their members. I'm looking forward to those events and catching up with bonsai friends there too.

Wodonga Show, March 17, 2018

Theo here, writing about this year's Wodonga Show held on March 17, 2018.

Neil and I both attended the show this year and it must be said numbers of visitors at the show seemed to be down from last year. This most likely had a lot to do with the number of events on in Wodonga alone over the weekend (Chryslers on the Murray and a Food and Wine Festival at Junction Square).

Having said that, those that did visit very much enjoyed the display that we put on. I say we, but the vast majority of trees were provided by Neil. Some nearly accidentally came home with me 😊.

I must say it was a little disappointing not to have any other members participate or even attend to have a look and it will be my mission to get a few more members involved next year. We have Albury Show coming up later in the year and I will be working on members for this event as well. Start getting your trees ready as the novice section is wide open, and we need to provide competition for Neil in the open section as well. **START PLANNING.**

In order to see what you missed here are a few photos of the day. Seeing trees in the 'bark' is so much better and my photography leaves a little to be desired.





We all love to hear from other members about anything bonsai related.

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

Does anyone have anything for next month's

newsletter?

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.

Fees for 2018 will be due in March.

If you have just joined us we're happy to host you as a visitor until then.

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.

Name:

Postal address:

Telephone:

Email address:

Membership type: Family

Individual

Concession