

The YVBS meets on the second Tuesday of each month temporarily at the Montrose Public Hall.**



52 C7

Informal/Review sessions begin at 7:00pm with a call to order at 7:30.

Saturday Workshops are 2pm on the first Saturday of the month. (Japara House Shed; Melway 52 D7) Check the website for details!

**** SEE PAGE 6— Important!**

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The Yarra Valley Bonsai Society Newsletter

Highlights from July & August 2009

Many of our trees may have been dormant in July and August, but we certainly weren't. In retrospect, for many of our members it was one of those periods which see loved ones wondering whether this 'hobby' has irrevocably been transcended into the realm of obsession....

For about a dozen members, this winter's highlight was doubtless the first YVBS with Craig Wilson. Over five weeks, Craig masterfully led the participants through all major aspects of care and styling. To paraphrase the comments of one participant, "there was so much information, complete with reading and class notes, and so much hands on work that it seemed like an intermediate course." As with so many endeavors the confidence gained was of equal importance to the competencies: students hesitant to lop off an unwanted branch were transformed into radical pruning junkies! All this is a tribute to Craig, who prepared detailed notes for each session and spent time with each specimen tree, often staying well past the appointed end time. (See the section on our next course and tutorials in the following pages.)



Rudi and Lee consider styling options in the course.

Preparations for the show are continuing, with the Show Committee meeting every fortnight or so. Most of the documentation, including .pdf files of posters and plant submission forms are now located in the Club Business section of the online Forum. Marketing is well on track with local papers and perhaps even a promo spot on 3AW. As the show approaches, we'll have more information both on preparing plants for display as well as on the administrative

aspects of the show: duty rosters, tasking, etc. We should also acknowledge the assistance pledged by the Waverley Group in lending tables and coverings. The Show wasn't the only thing on our plate these two months. Bill and John K. facilitated a short bonsai talk/demo at Bunnings Croydon at the end of July and a similar stall has been penciled in by Peter for 21 November. Great opportunities for getting some exposure and recruiting new members. A similar 'chat' is slated for the Mooroolbark Public Library in late September.



Bunnings Croydon Presentation



Craig and Neil discuss branch selection.

Calendar Dates:

- Tuesday 8 September and 13 October 2009
YVBS Monthly Meeting 7.00-9.30pm
Montrose Public Hall (Melway 52 D7)
- 3-4 October Bonsai Society of Victoria Show. Details: www.bonsaisocietyvictoria.org
- 10-11 October: South Australia Bonsai Society Show
- Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 October Yarra Valley Orchid Society Spring Show
- Saturday 17 October—Yarra Valley Bonsai Society Show
10am-4pm Montrose Town Centre
- Saturday 17 October, Northern Suburbs (Melbourne) Bonsai Society Show
- 24-25 October—Bonsai Northwest Show
Details: www.bonsainorthwest.com.au
- 31 October—1 November: Ballarat Bonsai Society Show
- 31 October—1 November: Geelong Bonsai Club Show
- 31 October—1 November Goldfields Bonsai Show, Castlemaine.
- 13-15 November: Lilydale Show—YVBS display in Horticulture Shed.
- 21 November: YVBS Demo at Bunnings, Chirnside Park (Croydon), VIC 9.30am to 2pm

July/August Highlights *Con't from page 1*

One of the most enjoyable parts of the July/August period was the Kids' Workshop run during the July School Holidays. About ten children (and not just the progeny of current members!) attended a section of our usual Saturday Workshop and were able to craft a small bonsai and take it home. Given the rainy weather, not too shabby a turnout. Our thanks go to [Paddy's Plants](#) and to [A to Z Bonsai Starters](#) (both in Monbulk) for providing significant discounts on pots and starter stock for this event. As you can see from the photos on the right, the children were justifiably proud of the results, some of which may find their way to the Children's Table at our October Show. The success of this event has prompted us to offer a similar workshop for children at our Show. These guys will hopefully be advancing bonsai in Australia in decades to come, and what better legacy as bonsai enthusiasts can we leave!

July and August also saw the planning of two major club buying trips organized by Rudi and Marlene. Over these two trips, covering at least five nurseries including Orient Bonsai, Bonsai Art, Din San and Plantmark, members were able to acquire some great stock for work. And as an added bonus, Rudi was able to negotiate some on-going discounts for club members. (See page 8!)

Chris S, in the midst to the Imagination Tree's move down the hill from Monbulk to Mount Evelyn, still found the time to do two major sessions for us. One was on soil composition and the latter was a last minute fill-in for Paul Sweeney, who alas was not able to deliver his demo due to a back injury. In the later session (depicted at right) Christ encouraged some radical hard pruning work in the waning weeks of winter. Topics also included sealing wounds, Dremel tool work for smoothing tapers and creating features, and basics of sacrifice branches.

Speaking of the Imagination Tree's move, Chris has kindly offered the club the option on selling on plants which won't make the trip down the hill. Not only will this be a great fundraiser, but members will benefit from prices SO insane that it would make even Chris and Maree blush. Hello! Hello! We'll have more details on this in the weeks to come, but thanks are certainly due to Chris and the whole mob at "Bonsai—The Imagination Tree" for coming up with a win-win situation for both their organization and the club! As a club we always have dreamed of being wealthy enough to buy and sell *stock options* !



July School Holidays Kids Workshop



Can I get this in a glazed poly box?



"To Prune or Not to Prune....that is the question"



No pruning angst here!



Update from the Shirt Stirrers:

The first run of club shirts has been completed. Pre-ordered t-shirts, polos, and caps are now ready for pick-up at workshops and meetings. A subsequent order can be facilitated whenever there are sufficient orders to warrant a reorder. Shirts are offered in plain 100% cotton T [\$12.50] or 100% cotton polo [\$25.00], with the logo embroidered on the upper left. For sizes, refer to the "Club Business" Folder on the FORUM for more details. Also available are caps for \$10.00.

We are looking to add to this with YVBS work aprons or canvass tool rolls, later this year or at the start of 2010. The YVBS embroidered Akubra hats, speedo swimsuits, iPhone pouch, flannelette jammies, garden gloves, and tea cozy won't be far behind.....



Nigella Lawson models the latest in YVBS fashion wear and accessories...as well as the results of her recent cosmetic surgery.....

Getting to Know You...



Andrea: "Hi— my name is Andrea. I am absolutely bonsai obsessed, as I will have a go at bonsai-ing just about anything from chrysanthemums to gum trees and lots in between. My favourites are pines at the moment. I enjoy experimenting with new techniques and if I lose a few on the way, I don't mind as long as I learn from it. My collection of bonsai is still very young [nothing over 5 years] and I have too many..... I am fortunate to work at 'Bonsai –The Imagination Tree' one day a week where I try to put my enthusiasm to *good* [doing what Chris tells me], rather than to *evil* [carrying out experimental bending and carving techniques I just read about] on the stock trees! So far so good!"

Warren: "I moved to Melbourne (now residing in Selby) from Perth back in 1979 with my wife, who was originally from Mt Waverley. My grandfather, who lived next door to us in Perth, was into bonsai in a reasonable way, not that I took an overly big interest in them other than they looked great. As time weathered me, those trees seemed to be looking better each year, so I started to get an appreciation for the art of growing them. It wasn't until last year, when my wife noticed that a new Bonsai Association was being formed and suggested I join, that I've decided to do anything about it. The result is I now have about 10 trees, have a lot to learn, and am enjoying the challenge. With patience, one day I'll have a decent plant I can happily display."

Note: Andrea will jump on soon as Librarian and Warren has just survived his first couple of Committee of Management Meetings as our new Treasurer.

In each newsletter, we profile a member or two as a means of getting to know each other better. In that spirit, and as our group continues to grow, members are reminded to bring their nametag/membership cards to meetings

Ask Mr. Miyagi.....

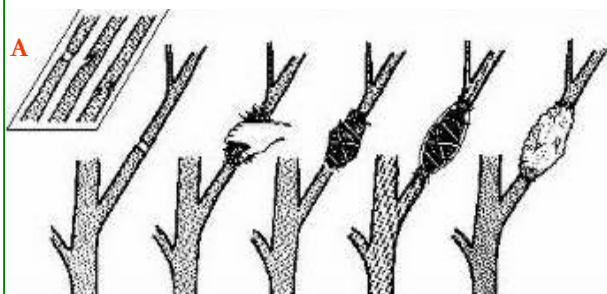


Q: Dear Mr. Miyagi: I keep hearing people talk about 'air-layering' but I'm not sure what it is, let alone how to do it. I'm a bit too embarrassed to ask.

A: Dear Reader: First of all, how will you learn unless you ask? Anyway, air-layering is a process by which you 'start a new tree' from a branch or trunk on an existing tree. Some trees will work with this whereas others will not. Doing this with natives is a bit more of a hit and miss proposition than with deciduous trees. For 'exotic' trees [=non-natives] these are usually begun in mid-spring, as starting this

too early while the tree is dormant can be an invitation to rot or die-off of the essential cambium layer (that thin blanket of green cells just below the bark). Traditionally, what you do is take some slices off the bark in a pattern, pack the area with wet sphagnum moss and bind this up as tightly as possible using cling wrap or rubbish bag to prevent it drying out [Picture A]. New pre-roots are meant to strike from the cuts, forming a small new 'root ball' within the packing. Depending on the species, you'll have a new 'tree', complete with a small root system ready to be sawn off the 'parent tree' in a couple of months. [Picture B] Note that some practitioners prefer a translucent wrapping whereas others prefer an opaque one. For a first go, try this with a Chinese elm or trident maple. Be **very** careful when removing the packing as the new roots are extremely fragile; in most instances, don't even think of taking this new 'tree' and placing it straight into a bonsai pot. The root tissue needs time to develop! If you go with this wrapped moss approach, make sure you seal it well, using ties or waterproof gaffer tape. A recent issue of Bonsai Focus had a good article on this where the author used a colander with soil, watering and feeding the area as if it were an independent tree. I've heard of adding a shot of diluted plant starter and seasoil by syringe once a month into the process.

Another tip is to work some root-strike powder into a paste and coat the slices before packing moss around it.



Members may submit questions to Mr. Miyagi c/o the YVBS web forum or per the club email: info@yarravalleybonsai.org.au

“The Natives are Restless”

Botanical Name

Common Name

Babingtonia Virgata

Baeckea

Sun: Full sun to late afternoon shade

Temperature: Grows robustly from 0 centigrade to an occasional day of 40 degrees BUT wants moist soil.

Watering: A Baeckea is very thirsty! In a shallow pot it does better in a water tray. In a deeper training pot it is only necessary to keep the soil moist. However, one of my Baeckea went to a new home where the water tray was not used. The tree lost all its foliage, reoriented itself, grew a new lot and lives without a water tray.



Training: I have rescued several severely neglected Baeckea, bare rooted each one, potted in very open, gravelly soil mix laced with Native Osmocote, waited several months for each tree to realise life was suddenly good and they each took off. It shoots back on old wood readily [tho not always where you need it to], easily develops padding and can be wired with no trouble as long as you watch the growth and remove before the wire cuts. To get foliage pads I hedge prune and finger comb the foliage.

Fertilizing: Native Osmocote at repotting and Charlie Carp through the season.

Repotting: Can take bare rooting and repotting can be done twice a year, spring and autumn. I use a gravelly open soil mix with great results.

Propagation: They can be grown from cuttings in Autumn or from seeds in Spring but why would you bother when there are an absolute mass of them growing in Australia. I have had excellent success collecting tree's from the banks of rivers, private property and even the side of roads. (Permission should always be obtained from land owners).

Pests or diseases: I have had no trouble with pests and Baeckea.

Comments

This tree is an easy grower, develops rapidly, has nicely textured bark and lovely foliage with the new growing tips red, greening up with maturity. It has small flowers in spring if not pruned too hard.

—Lee W



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www.bonsaisolutions.com.au
 Check out their online FORUM for Australian natives!

Quiz Question:

If you can't see the roots, does it still count as a 'root over rock'??

"Answer" on page 6



"Pain is inevitable. Suffering is optional."

- - -Zen Proverb



"Tim's Tips" Corner

There's been a lot of tossing around of two topics recently amongst members and on the forum. One of these is fertiliser. I'm not going to jump into the debate on whether Seasol is a fertilizer. All I'll add to this one is that proper feeding is fine, but the best food possible in the best dose possible won't mean much if the roots aren't encouraged to take it in. The pH of the soil is of course important, as is the grit factor. But one thing I swear by, particularly for pines and conifers, is Dolomite Lime. It's absolutely essential and I make it a part of my Blood/Bone and Lifter mixes. The other topic is air layering. My buddy Miyagi discusses this on page three. Let me just say that I prefer the method of NOT ringbarking the trunk or branch, but rather cutting sections in length about one and a third times the diameter of the branch and in thickness enough to get 6 to eight slices around the trunk or branch. Then I pack in the usual way, though I have used the suspended pot method as well. There is no RIGHT way...whatever works for you.... Try a few different ways and see what's best in terms of time, materials, success at fibrous growth over time. One thing is for sure, if I use moss, I chop it up then soak it before application to minimize the chance of damaging the new fibrous roots when I remove the layer.

Tim Vivoda is the owner of A to Z Bonsai in Monbulk. His section appears in each newsletter.



Kanji/Ideograms of the Month

You may recall from Vol. 2.1 the ideograms for Japan:



Sun + Origin: thence "Land of the Rising Sun". How about China?

The kanji for jewel, or coin, or gem can be



Once you fence that in with a border, the collection or demarcation of gems and wealth, is the ideogram for country:



The combination of the Kanji for centre or middle plus the above is how CHINA is rendered: The Middle Kingdom.



Note: a series of kanji reforms took place in Japan after World War II, simplifying the system. In older texts (and indeed in Chinese variants) China was rendered as:



with the second ideogram having more to do with a castle or keep...protection as a precursor to wealth, really.

Waverley Garden Club Bonsai Group Spring Show: 15-16 August

On a weekend of rather crazy (=typical) Melbourne weather, the Waverley Garden Club Bonsai Group held its show. Not only are several members of our club also members of Waverley, but we probably had enough members there on Sunday morning to convene a "Show Committee", looking to see how the veterans do it! A great show all around, & a HUGE thank you to the Waverley Group for agreeing to lend us tables and cloths for our Oct Show!



Tree Mini-Profile: *Pieris Japonica*

Also known as Japanese Andromeda. Of the seven species of the genus 'Pieris', this is probably the most commonly used for bonsai. Advanced specimens can be found not too expensively in local nurseries. This plant has no problem shooting from the wooded bits, so pruning isn't a drama...just wait until AFTER flowering. However, it IS prone to die back, so seal major cuts. This is a fairly good plant for beginners, particularly if a flowering bonsai is sought. Note the pieris requires some shade during longer days. Most important, it is "lime-phobic"...so fertilise only with an ericaceous (pH) lowering fertilizer. (i.e.: it is acid loving like azaleas and rhododendrons.) Repot every 3-4 years with a lime free mix. After flowing, strip the remainder of the flower structures. You can take greenwood cuttings in early summer. Prone to root rot and to chlorosis and some types of leaf spotting.

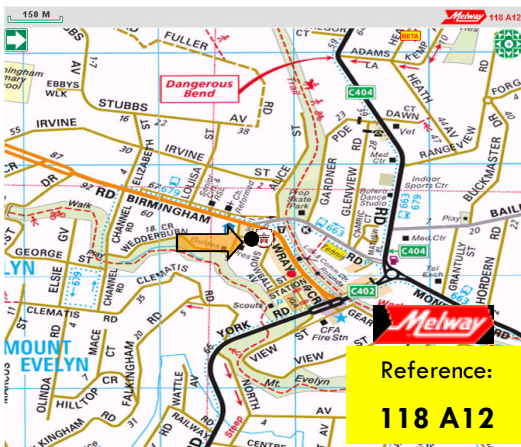


Website Of the Month:

<http://www.bonsaichannel.com/> Similar to (but not nearly as entertaining and informative as Lindsay Farr's videos), this site is an arm of <http://www.dallasbonsai.com/> (contains some good links and archive pages), proving if nothing else that not everything from Texas is void of culture, maybe just ex-Presidents.

September and October Monthly Meetings:

Per emails, our September and October meetings will shift to the Montrose Public Hall, just a few doors up from our venue at Japara House. Due to the growth of our club and the need for storage space on-site, however, we will be moving out to a new location from November 2009: The Mount Evelyn Presbyterian Church Hall, 30-38 Birmingham Road, Mount Evelyn. Plenty of parking, a safer service road entrance, and wheelchair/trolley accessible.....and storage!



A Big
THANK
YOU TO
Margaret
W. for
suggest-
ing and
helping to
facilitate
this move!

(We have
two Marg W's
in the club...
here NOT the
one who likes
to take pho-
tos!)

From Page 4: Quiz

Question-

Can't answer that one. It doesn't really matter for this specimen, because it's a potato that's been in the pantry a bit too long!



Another Novice Course?

Our first novice course concluded in early August with eleven very satisfied participants. We hope to not only offer another Novice course before the end of the calendar year (on the week-ends for those who could not make the Tuesday meetings) but to draft an intermediate course as well.

Feedback is currently being gathered from the participants of the first course to fine tune the curriculum if needed. We look to retain the 10-12 hour training total, but are open to extending or contracting this if possible if desired by prospective matriculants.

As far as an intermediate course is concerned, we will be working to specify a curriculum and set of learning outcomes and hope to offer this course early in 2010.



BONSAI CLUBS INTERNATIONAL

<http://www.bonsai-bci.com>

Have you ever thought about joining BCI?

Bonsai Clubs International (BCI) is a non-profit educational organisation, advancing the ancient and living art of bonsai and related arts through the global sharing of knowledge. We educate while promoting international friendship and building world relationships through cooperation with individuals and organisations whose purpose is consistent with ours.

Bonsai is a unique, living art-form enjoyed and practiced by diverse cultures, utilising the lessons of nature to improve the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of mankind and our relationship to the environment. Glenis Bebb and Ian Glew are the Australian directors of BCI and would be happy to provide further information.

glen@bonsainursery.com.au

iglew@b022.aone.net.au

Clubs or individuals are able to join Bonsai Clubs International (BCI) which is the longest running Bonsai organisation in the World. Benefits of being part of the group are:

- Quarterly copy of the Bonsai and Stone Appreciation magazine.
- BCI Annual Convention discount in varied and diverse locations.
- Discounts on a range of books and magazines.
- Access to the BCI web site.
- BCI sponsored competitions, many with prizes.
- Ambassador program including a quarterly newsletter.

www.bonsai-bci.com

Becoming a member of a larger Bonsai Family of enthusiasts is fun and rewarding and expands your knowledge of Bonsai and Stone Appreciation.

Membership is only US\$40.00 per year. For further information check out the website or email bcibizness@cox.net.

Chris Sirre's Day Trip to the Western Suburbs: "The Occidental Tourist"

A Visit to The Vietnamese Community's First Bonsai Exhibition

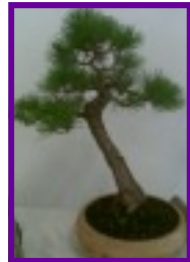
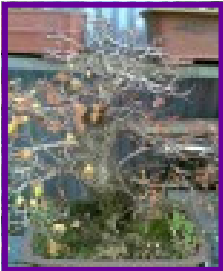
Sunday 28th June I made my way to Sunshine North where the first Vietnamese Community Bonsai Exhibition was held. A few days prior I spoke to Tran from Baloc Bonsai in Ardeer and he mentioned that it was not far from his nursery. Therefore I decided to see his nursery first. For the people who don't know Tran he is a very knowledgeable and skilful bonsai artist. His specialty is Pines and Cedars.



As soon as you walk through the gates of his property (a residential block) there are trees everywhere. You will even find project trees on the roof!! On the left are some of the trees at Baloc Bonsai. Together with Tran I went to the Vietnamese Community Bonsai Exhibition. I'm glad he was driving and knew where it was.....at the end of an industrial area. There were some interesting trees there. The unusual thing was that most of those trees were for sale. The prices were very much on the high end side. Most of the people around seemed to be from the Vietnamese community, but I saw our member Ray there. For the people who didn't go I took some pictures (right and below) It was worth the travel to the other side of town and suggest you give Baloc Bonsai (www.balocbonsai.com.au) a visit when you're in the area.



Chris Sirre - Bonsai The Imagination Tree



Library Update: Book 'em, Ruth!

Ruth (at left) will be assisting with the library and spearheading acquisitions over the next few months. In addition to the member-to-member loan system, Ruth will brief the membership in September on the checkout and return policies. Once we have moved into a larger venue with storage space, we'll really start to build a decent inventory. Ruth has already received a few book donations from members, has made some purchases, and is also open to "be on the lookout for___" leads. Please refer to the Library section of the FORUM.

How to save \$10.00:



Please note that all membership renewals must be completed by 30 September. After this date, all renewed memberships will be subject to the same \$10.00 initiation fee as with brand new members. You needn't fill out a new form unless your contact details have changed. Subscriptions will be collected at workshops and meetings or can be facilitated by posting a cheque to the YVBS per the address on page 1, or by electronic transfer, or over-the-counter deposit at any Bendigo Bank branch.

(Please bring membership cards for updating)



(Please contact Peter Raymakers at 9726 6176, 0431 817 470, or email rayfam5@lizzy.com.au for banking details if required or if you have membership questions.)

Renewal Membership fees for individuals..... \$25.00 (valid to 30 June 2010)

Renewal Membership fees for a household membership..... \$35.00 (valid to 30 June 2010)

ヤラ谷間盆栽会

July -August
2009
Volume 2 No. 4

www.yarrawalleybonsai.org.au

A group for all lovers of bonsai in the "far east" of Melbourne.....



Yarra Valley Bonsai Society
PO Box 345
Mount Evelyn, Victoria 3796
Australia

Where Have All the Trade Items Gone?

The list of bonsai supplies (for purchase by YVBS members) included in the last couple of newsletters has now been pruned from the newsletter and grafted in the Forum.

Unless items on offer [or prices] change, we will run this in newsletters only a couple of times per year.

You can visit the YVBS Forum at:

<http://yarrawalleybonsai.org.au/yabb/YaBB.pl>

For first-time club members, once you've registered, please convey your username to yarrawalleybonsai@gmail.com so we can add you to the Members' Section

Special Tutorial Opportunity!

Craig Wilson, who provided the main session at a monthly meeting this season and who has recently led our first novice course, has agreed to lead facilitated workshops at his nursery. The cost would be \$30/person for a four hour session with a group ceiling of six persons. The idea would be that members bring their plants, wire, tools (soil can be provided for repotting) and receive crafting and care advice/assistance. If you speak to any of the participants from the novice course, their testimony no doubt will be that Craig's help and support in the 'hands on' aspects especially were key in furthering the participants' skills. There is no questioning Craig's knowledge and experience and members of all levels would find this worthwhile!

Rudi will be coordinating the sessions, which would probably be on a Saturday or Sunday morning (or possibly during the week ex Tuesday) depending on demand/schedules of those interested.

If you are interested and/or wish to know more, please contact Rudi J. via the gmail address or the FORUM.

Accolades, Kudos, and Thanks..

Our Thanks to Recent Helpers.....

1. To Craig Wilson for facilitating a great course for our novice members.
2. To John K. for helping out at the Bunnings Demo.
3. To Bonsai-The Imagination Tree for offering discounts on stock to our Novice Course.
4. To Paddy's Plants and A to Z Bonsai in Monbulk for discounting plants for our Kids' Workshop in July.
5. To Tim at "A to Z Bonsai" for contributing items to our most recent raffle tables and discounts for the July novice demo....
6. To Warren for volunteering to serve as Treasurer.



Kaz Cade
Foundation Member

Recent additions to the list of perks for Members

Please refer to the website for a list of discounts received by members upon presentation of a current and valid YVBS Membership card. "Freebies" of donated items are also made available from time to time at monthly meetings.

Wholesale prices at DIN SAN NURSERY 370 - 418 Old Dandenong Road in Dingley, you'll need to get the Club Buyers' Card from Rudi for scanning at check-out.

GARDENERS GATE NURSERY 109 Perry Road in Keysborough,. No set discount— just a pledge to look after our members, which they certainly did on the club shopping trip!

Wholesale prices at PLANTMARK 30 Mahoneys Road in Thomastown (not far from Orient Bonsai Nursery. Just mention you're from the Yarra Valley Bonsai Society.

Advertisers & Sponsors:

Advertising on our website and/or newsletter is available for any registered business or sole trader. Society Sponsorship opportunities exist for any business operating in an area related to the craft of bonsai.

For details contact Peter via the society's external email: info@yarrawalleybonsai.org.au