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The YVBS meets on the **second Tuesday of each month at Chirnside Park Community Hub**

33 Kimberley Drive Chirnside Park

Meetings begin at 7:30pm.

Saturday Workshops are



1-4:00pm on the **Last Saturday of the month, at the same venue as monthlies!**

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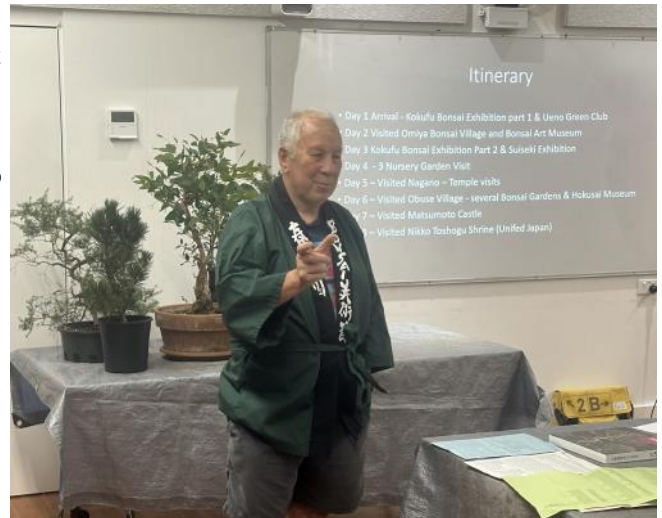
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The Yarra Valley Bonsai Society Newsletter

Highlights from March & April 2024

The March meeting started with a report from David R on his recent visit to Japan with a tour group organized by prominent bonsai professional Tony Bebb from Brisbane. He visited the Kokufu Bonsai Exhibition in Tokyo as well as a number of private bonsai gardens of prominent Japanese bonsai masters. David was very enthusiastic about his trip and showed us some of the items that he had purchased there—pots, stands, and stones. Such a pity that we are not allowed to bring trees back into Australia!

This presentation was followed by a Tree Laboratory, where some members brought in interesting or problem trees from their collection



Above - David R talks about his trip to Japan.



Left - Steve M gives his opinion to Nick R on Nick's kunzea..

to talk about them, and seek advice or comments from the audience.

Lindsay H brought in a River Red Gum, Steve M a native tree, Patrick an ash and an Atlas cedar, Stefan a pine, and Nick R a kunzea. An entertaining and informative session with much discussion from the assembled members.

The April meeting was general workshop where members brought in their

own trees to work on in a community atmosphere, seeking advice and assistance from more experienced members when needed. Several workshops are organized for our Tuesday

Calendar Dates:

- 5th May (Sunday) Bonsai Lunch at David's. 12 noon.
- 14th May (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. Chirnside Hub.
- 17th May to 20th May (Friday to Monday) AABC National Convention. Brisbane.
- 19th May (Sunday) Japan Festival. 10am to 5pm. Box Hill Town Hall.
- 25th May (Saturday) YVBS Sale Day. 10am to 1pm. Chirnside Hub.
- 25th May (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 1pm. Chirnside Hub.
- 1st June (Saturday) Satsuki Bonsai Interest Group meeting. 1:30pm. Bonsai Art, Heatherton.
- 11th June (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. Chirnside Hub.
- 29th June (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 1pm. Chirnside Hub.

See also the Events Calendar on our website: www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au

Highlights from March & April - Cont. From Page 1



Above - Workshop night at the April meeting.

evening meetings throughout the year, to cater especially for those members who cannot attend our regular Last Saturday of the Month workshops.

Bonsai Training Courses

The Introduction to Bonsai Training Course was run in April with a total of 9 students, a record high for recent years. This year, the course ran over two consecutive Saturday mornings from 9am to 1pm. The course covers a wide range including origins, styles, species, growing and development, refinement, wiring, repotting and maintenance. A new course manual which better reflects the current content was provided to all students for reference during the course and for future review.

The next scheduled course will be in 2025, however if there is sufficient demand this may be brought forward to later in the 2024 year. Any interested members should put their names down on the list present at each meeting, or contact Lindsay H linhad14@gmail.com.



Above - 2024 Training Course

Vic. Native Club Display

Any members who visited the Bonsai Exhibition in March would have seen the unique Australian landscape depicted in the photograph—it was a standout and I can't imagine how it did not win the public vote for "Best Tree". Possibly only because it was not a standalone tree.

Older YVBS members will not be surprised that it was a creation of our own member John G. John is renowned for the quality of his trees and arrangements but this takes it to the next level. The workmanship of the hand-made hut and outhouse was superb. Congratulations John!



Library Check-out!

YVBS has a comprehensive range of bonsai books and magazines in our library, all of which are available for borrowing without charge. Remember, the checkout period for books and other library material is one month. If you check out a book and are not able to make the next meeting, you can return the book at a workshop or even post it to the club PO Box.



Trade Table Cheque-out!

The trade table has been restocked with new tools, wire and other accessories. A selection of pots are also in stock. Don't forget the club's tool sharpening kit, available for use at meetings. Anything else you would like to see stocked? Just advise at the trade table or to any committee member.



Special Sale Day

Our Special Sale Day for 2024 will be held on Saturday 25th May from 10am to 1pm at the Chirnside Park Community Hub, immediately prior to our normal Last Saturday of the Month workshop.

Promotional flyers will be sent with the Monthly Update email for May near the first of the month. We request all members to forward the flyers to any friends and relatives who may be interested, and to print and post to any public noticeboards to which they may have access. A number of hard copies will also be available at the next meeting.

Any non-members who purchase trees at the Sale day are invited to attend the workshop in the afternoon to seek advice and assistance with their trees.

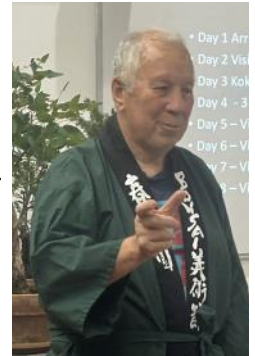
There are always a large variety of starter trees, bonsai, pots and materials on offer from our sellers, which is a great opportunity to browse and hopefully pick up that little gem that you have been waiting for! We hope to see all members browsing the tables.

David's Bonsai Lunch

Judi and David R have once again invited members to a Bonsai Lunch at their home in Warrandyte on Sunday 5th May at 12 noon. Bring your own BBQ meat and drinks, salads and dessert will be provided by David.

David has an impressive bonsai collection and garden which visitors are welcome to inspect. He also promises an entertaining Bonsai Bingo to keep us entertained.

This will be a great social day and a chance to get to know other members in an informal setting. If you intend to come, let David know before the end of April so that he can organize the necessary catering supplies. Contact him on 0402 032 001 or by email at david@acefilters.com.au. David will advise his address to all RSVP's, or it is available on his hard copy notices.



Hitotoshi Saito Demonstrations

The Bonsai Society of Victoria have organised for esteemed Japanese Bonsai Master Hirotohi Saito to visit Melbourne for a series of demonstrations and workshops in July this year. They have kindly invited other clubs to participate in the scheduled activities. His workshops have all sold out, however seats are available to attend his demonstrations—on Thursday evening 4th July and Saturday evening 7th July from 6pm to 9pm. Tickets are \$35 each and may be sourced through the BSV website bonsaisocietyvictoria.com.au. The venue is the Huntingdale Golf Club, Windsor Avenue, Oakleigh South.

Hiro was a popular and regular visitor to Melbourne a few years back and his return is welcomed by all who know him. He has extensive bonsai knowledge and an easy and friendly style, with good English language skills. **Late News—an additional workshop has been added, book after 1st May!**




YVBS Tony Bebb Workshops

Many members will remember that the Club brought well-known bonsai professional Tony Bebb down from Brisbane last year to hold tutored workshops and present at our Club meeting. His presentation was extremely educational and it was a joy to attend his workshops. The Club will again bring him down this year in October.

Tutored workshops will be held on Sunday morning 6th October from 9am to 12 noon, and again in the afternoon from 1pm to 4pm. Booking sheets will be available at Club meetings or can be made by emailing Lindsay H at linhad14@gmail.com. Get in early so you don't miss out as places are limited.


Members also have an opportunity to book a private one-on-one session with Tony at the member's home/garden on Monday 7th October or Tuesday 8th October, in either the morning or afternoon. Discuss with Lindsay if interested.






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Community Involvement

Your Club is periodically contacted by various community organisations in the surrounding areas to provide a speaker to educate them on the art of bonsai. As we are committed to extend bonsai knowledge as widely as

possible, and also promote Club membership, we rarely decline the invitation.

Recently, a presentation and demonstration was given to the Healesville Garden Club by Patrick I, assisted by Lindsay H.



Patrick started by giving a brief presentation on the basics of bonsai, discussed some of the bonsai trees brought along for display, and then finished with a simple demonstration of how to convert a typical nursery tree into the structure of what will become a bonsai in the future.

The Garden Club President provided us with the following comments after the presentation—*“feed back I got from the members was so very positive regarding the talk and they found it so enlightening and such a quality informative talk with so much to think about.”*

Well done Patrick!



End-Of-Month Saturday Workshop

The regular Last Saturday of the Month workshops are a relaxed place to work on our trees, discuss our bonsai activities with like-minded people, or seek advice or assistance with our trees. There is usually something interesting going on, and plenty of trees to look at, in various stages of development.

If you are looking for advice or assistance, try to seek opinions from various members, and take the advice which best fits your feelings. Remember that there are no “right” answers when it comes to styling—it is your tree and your choice.

The workshops often provide a first point of contact for interested parties who are considering learning more about bonsai or joining the club.

Visitors are always welcome! Bring along any trees that you may have for advice if needed, or just come along for an introduction to the art of bonsai. There is no obligation or cost.



Open from 1:00pm to 4:00pm on the last Saturday of each month except December, at the Chirnside Park Community Hub.

BONSAI SENSATION NURSERY

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Tree Profile: Ash - *Fraxinus*

General: According to *Wikipedia* the **Ash**, is a genus of flowering plants in the olive and lilac family, Oleaceae. It contains 45–65 species of usually medium to large trees, mostly deciduous though a few subtropical species are evergreen. The genus is widespread across much of Europe, Asia and North America.

It is highly regarded by 'Bonsai Enthusiasts' around the world for its bark variations and some flowering species.

Lighting & Temperature: They're very hardy and tolerate full sun to shade and can tolerate a windy spot if watered well. Frost tolerant to -10°C!

Watering: Frequently, especially during hot and windy weather, reduce watering in winter.

Feeding: Feed every two weeks during the growing season using a high nitrogen fertiliser for young trees in training! For older trees use a low nitrogen fertiliser to prevent the leaves from getting too big. Feeding less until the end of autumn will assist in reducing the leaf size too. Stop feeding when leaves drop.

Repotting: Best time in spring, before bud burst, every 1 - 2 years for young plants and every 4-5 years for older ones in free draining soil. Carry out root pruning up to two thirds at the same time!

Pruning: Structural branch pruning and shoot pinching is best done throughout the growing season and hard pruning in winter.

Leaf pruning every second year in late spring is important to reduce the size of the large leaves. Total defoliation can be done twice per season to increase ramification

Wiring: Anytime on younger branches, but on older branches using guide wires is recommended - they can be very brittle!

Propagation: Use hardwood cuttings in winter and cold-treated seeds in spring. Air-layer in late-Spring after spring growth has hardened.

Pests and diseases: Watch out for scale, root rot and sooty mold.

Styles: Formal & Informal Upright, Slanting, Semi Cascade, Single or Multiple Trunks, Group Planting and Root-over-Rock.

Not good for Shohin due to leaf size!

Some species suitable for bonsai:

Fraxinus excelsior, known as the **European ash** or **common ash**, to distinguish it from other types of ash, is flowering.

The bark on young trees is pale grey and smooth, becoming rough and vertically fissured on old trees. The buds are jet black.

Fraxinus angustifolia, the **narrow-leaved ash**, the bark is smooth and pale grey on young trees, becoming square-cracked and knobby on old trees. The buds are pale brown, which readily distinguishes it from the *Fraxinus excelsior*.

Fraxinus ornus, the **South European flowering ash**, the bark is dark grey, remaining smooth even on old trees.

The buds are pale pinkish-brown to grey-brown. The flowers are produced in dense panicles 10cm long after the new leaves appear in late spring.



On The Display Table



A selection of trees on the Display Table at the March and April meetings.



Bonsai Calendar: May—June

As Autumn draws to a close, your deciduous trees have completed their growth cycle and are in preparation for dormancy. Evergreen varieties may not stop growing completely but their growth rate will slow down dramatically. Among many other tasks, winter is a great time to contemplate styling and restyling your bonsai (especially deciduous trees). Having the ability to see the skeleton of your trees will assist you in improving the basic branch structure and ramification of your bonsai.

Here are a few things to consider over the winter months.

- Remove all fruit and seeds from your trees as it can promote die back and disease.
- Once all the green leaves have changed or fallen you can begin cutting back on deciduous trees to shape with out fear of the tree bleeding.
- After all leaves have fallen, clean up all debris around your bonsai area (including the tops of the pots), to reduce potential homes and hiding places for pests.
- Any trees that have been protected from the summer sun can be pushed back into the open. The winter sun will promote bud development and tighten spring growth.
- Adjust your watering routine as your trees will be using less water. Rain may be more common. Avoid over watering at this time of year as trees are extremely susceptible to root rot. Keep deciduous trees on the dry side to promote autumn colour.
- If possible, make a habit of watering at the warmest part of the day. This will give the excess water a chance to drain before the cold nights.
- Keep an eye on pots that get completely covered with moss. This may interrupt the water intake and increase the chance of root rot.
- May and June are the best times to do heavy pruning and shaping to most conifers.
- Wire and bend branches while trees are on the dry side of the watering cycle. This will improve the flexibility of the branches and so reduce cracking or breaking.

Fertilizing isn't required for any dormant trees, but evergreens can still benefit from a light feeding.

The Wire Bonsai Art of Steve M

Our own Vice President Steve M obviously doesn't have enough trees at home—he has enough time on his hands to produce little masterpieces of bonsai art styled from bent and twisted wire. Following is a selection of his work, both recent and going back a few years. Great work Steve, so innovative and imaginative!



ヤラ谷間盆栽会

Volume 5 No 77
March & April
2024

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www.yarravalleybonsai.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

*Looking Ahead to
May & June 2024*



The monthly meeting on Tuesday 14th May at 7:30pm will feature a presentation from Tien of Bonsai Sensation who will be talking about "Deciduous Pruning and Styling". Tien is a club sponsor and has a wealth of knowledge and practical experience, so this will be a session not to be missed. Display Table—"Autumn Colours", or Member's Choice.



Our Special Sale Day will be on Saturday 25th May from 10am to 1pm, immediately prior to the Workshop. Lots of sellers with many good deals to be had!



The Last Saturday of the Month Workshop will be on Saturday 25th May from 1:00pm to 4:00pm.



The monthly meeting on Tuesday 11th June at 7:30pm will be a presentation on "Styling Dynamics" by Patrick I. Display Table—"Cascade and Semi-Cascade", or Member's Choice.



The Last Saturday of the Month Workshop will be on Saturday 29th June from 1:00pm to 4:00pm.



Other Events



The Association of Australian Bonsai Clubs on conjunction with the Bonsai Society of Queensland will hold the Annual Bonsai Convention, "Bonsai by Design", from 17th to 20th May in Brisbane. Venue is Royal on the Park, Brisbane City. Demonstrators are Koji Hiramatsu from Japan, Martin Walters from New Zealand, Lindsay and Glen Bebb from Queensland, and Andrew Selman from Queensland. Bookings close 1 May 2024. <https://bonsaisocietyqld.asn.au/Events/#/event/2024/5/16/36th-aabc-national-bonsai-convention>. (Note—accommodation is limited—see Lindsay H for options if interested in attending).



Japan Festival at Box Hill Town Hall on 19th May, 10am to 5pm. Entry \$5 for adults and over 12's, \$3 for seniors and 6-11 years, to enter hall. Outside and food area free. <https://www.jcv-au.org/japanfestival/jf-about-en>



The Bonsai Society of Victoria will be staging a small Bonsai Display at Rippon Lea Estate on Sunday 19th May as part of the Botanica Festival. Many other displays and stalls will also be present, as well as the beautiful gardens of course. Gold coin entry fee. 192 Hotham St, Elsternwick.

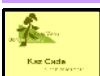


The Satsuki Bonsai Interest Group will hold a meeting on Saturday 1st June at 1:30pm at Bonsai Art Nursery, 236 Old Dandenong Road, Heatherton. All people with a relevant interest are welcome to attend.



YVBS ONLINE:

Our Website can be found at www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au—check it out for the latest information on Club activities. Also, the Club is on Facebook and Instagram, and all members are invited to join up and participate in the information exchange.



Member Benefits Refer to the website for a list of discounts to members upon presentation of a current & valid YVBS Membership card. "Freebies" of donated items are also made available from time to time at monthly meetings.

ADVERTISERS & SPONSORS:

Advertising on our website and/or in the newsletter is available for any registered business or sole trader. Society Sponsorship opportunities are capped at three for any year, however supportership opportunities still remain for any business in an area related to the craft of bonsai.

For a prospectus or further information contact us via the society's external email: info@yarravalleybonsai.org.au