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The Yarra Valley Bonsai Society Newsletter



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!



Highlights from November & December 2024

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
 **37 F3**
1-4:00pm on the **Last Saturday of the month, at the same venue as monthlies!**

The November Club meeting kicked off with a presentation from Patrick I on "Trees for a Warming Climate", looking forward to the apparent reality that we are entering a period of warming climate and considering what this means to us locally. The outlook is not all bad—we can look forward to less frosts and warmer, shorter winters, but perhaps longer and hotter heat waves in summer. There will be some benefits for us—increased CO2 will lead to more plant growth. Longer growing seasons might mean more opportunity for ramification - e.g. - Tony Bebb was telling us that he (and everyone else in Brisbane) gets 3 flushes of growth on their Japanese Black Pines. Maybe we will experience the same.



Above - Patrick speaking on Trees for a Warming Climate at the November meeting.

Further - those heat tender plants that you love now - will probably still be viable - whatever you do to nurture them through the heat spells that we have you will just need to do for longer - perhaps with a little bit more technical support - like misting systems to lower temperature.

There are many trees that we currently grow, know and love that will be perfectly fine in a warmer climate.

Coniferous Trees: Pines, cedars, junipers (especially USA varieties), some spruce.

Deciduous Trees: many oaks, bougainvillea, elms, hawthorn, pomegranate.

Broadleaf Evergreens: Olives, cotoneasters, pyracantha, metrosideros.

Other exotic species that may be considered for the future appear by considering other warmer regions of the world—Mediterranean, California, Madagascar, etc. Such plants as Manzanitas, Conocarpus, Phyllyrea, Uncaria, Pachypodium, Adansonia, Operculicarya may be appropriate, if available.

And some Australian natives from the dry tropics or rainforests, or even from the dryer parts of Victoria—Atalya salicifolia, Bologhia inopylla, Dysoxylum fraserianum, Flindersia maculosa, Erythrina vespertilio, Pittosporum angustifolium.

Following Patrick's presentation, Nick R talked a little about propagation techniques particularly from seed and by cuttings. He emphasized that growing from seed leads to natural genetic variation, while cuttings produce an effective clone of the parent plant. Use a soil medium with a

Continued Page 2

Calendar Dates:

- 14th January (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. Chirnside Park Hub.
- 25th January (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 1:00pm. Chirnside Park Hub.
- 8th February *Saturday). Tutored Workshops with Scott Martin. 9am and 1pm. Chirnside Park Hub.
- 11th February (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. Chirnside Park Hub.
- 15th February (Saturday) Satsuki Azalea Interest Group meeting. 1:30pm. Bonsai Art, Heatherton.
- 22nd February (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 1:00pm. Chirnside Park Hub.

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

Inside this issue:

Trade & Lib Update	2
2024 Bonsai Show	3
Bunnings Display	3
AABC 2025 Convention	4
Kudos, Accolades, Thanks	4
Saturday Workshops	4
Federal Election	4
Tree Profiles	5
Bonsai Training Course	5
Scott Martin Workshop	5
On The Display Table	6
Looking Ahead	8
Other Events	8
YVBS Online	8
YVBS Wall Calendar	8

Highlights from November & December - Cont. From Page 1

fine particle mix for both seed and cuttings, a perlite, peat and sand mixture is good. Cuttings in particular need moisture, but not too much.

A mini-greenhouse as available from Bunnings is useful to maintain the appropriate humidity and temperatures. For cuttings, first and second year growth is best. Make a half centimeter wound at the base and dip in hormone rooting powder prior to planting in the soil mix.

The December meeting was our Christmas breakup, which started off with a few members talking about one of their trees.

First up was Ken, who bought a *Ficus rubignosa* (Port Jackson Fig) that he had acquired after the death of our late Treasurer, Richard J. The tree is therefore very special to Ken and he managed to commission a pot from a renowned ceramicist (who does not normally do bonsai pots) – Ted Secomb.

Patrick reminded us that most, if not all of our trees, prefer a position in full sun, but it's worth transitioning them gradually if they have been in shade.

Next, Steve showed us two of David's lovely pots that he had repaired after breakage. Steve had managed to make a feature out of missing pieces by growing the cascading tree out of the gap. Very impressive "kintsugi" but don't drop your pots!

Grant then talked about his literati *Cedrus brevifolia* (Cyprian Cedar) that he is developing from nursery stock. It was an impressive tree for something that has only been a bonsai for a short while although Grant is hoping to create the impression of more movement using shari on the long, rather straight trunk.

David showed off his beautiful *Bougainvillea* that he had brought down from Queensland with a substantial root base and bright pink/purple flowers. It has had three flushes of blooms this year!

Then we had Jason to talk about his coveted *Larix decidua* (European Larch), a tree which has a reputation as being difficult to manage in a hot, dry climate. Jason has the advantage of being in a slightly cooler, wetter climate in the hills but recommends a slightly deeper pot than normal to make sure the roots are not exposed, and full sun (maybe a little afternoon shade and watch the wind). Larch have fine roots and need at least two months winter dormancy. They thicken quickly and can have up to three flushes of growth each year.

Lyn then got some advice on her Lemon Scented Gum which is in early development and has a lumpy lignotuber bulge just above ground level. The advice was to plant slightly lower in the pot to hide the lump and hope it shoots some more roots, give the tree plenty of fertiliser and let it grow some more.

Finally, Patrick showed us the progression of a large *Pinus contorta* that he had styled with Tony Bebb back in October. Patrick showed some photos and video of the design process (1) clean and thin the growth to allow light in (2) work out what branches can come off (using a black cloth to hide them so you can consider before cutting) and (3) changing the planting angle. Tony had talked about reducing the overall volume of the tree to make the trunk look thicker. Patrick explained how he will completely change the angle in the pot at the next report to turn the tree into a semi cascade. We look forward to updates on this tree as it develops.

At the conclusion of the presentation members enjoyed refreshments and a chat.



Above and Below - Members talk about one of their trees at the December meeting.



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. 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.



YVBS 2024 Bonsai Show

From President Patrick I:

The Annual Yarra Valley Bonsai Society Show was a great success this year and I wanted to thank you as a participant and someone who volunteered their time, table or tree. The show was an amazing combined effort. The stats:

- Over 60 trees submitted
- Close to \$11,500 in takings over the weekend
- 26 individual tree contributors
- 28 tables loaned—thank you
- Over 110 hours of time contributed over the weekend.

The things we can't measure:

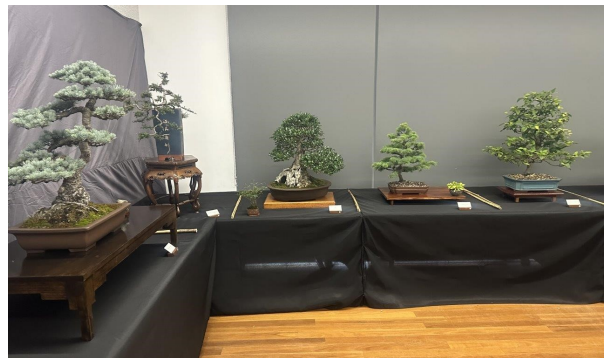
- Friendships strengthened or started
- Countless tree conversations
- Giving wonder and enjoyment to people
- Seeing the fruits of others' skill and artistry
- Being part of something bigger than ourselves.

There was a lot of other unmeasured work done in the lead up to the show - much of this by the committee. Thank you especially to the committee for all the behind the scenes work, all the km driven and emails and WhatsApp messages answered.

Finally, a special mention must go to Steve M who really is the Captain of the show. In the midst of a very full family and work life, Steve pours himself into the show and driving it to a better and better result each year. Thank you Steve and thank you everyone else for getting on board this year.

See you in 2025!

Top and Centre - New tablecloths this year improved the display. Maybe next year we can improve the backdrop! Bottom—the sales area on the Sunday—not much left!



Bunnings Display

Following our display at the Bunnings Lilydale Spring Launch, they once again invited us to participate in their Christmas Celebration on Thursday 5th December from 5pm to 7pm. We had a more prominent location this time and attracted a lot more attention from the public. Hopefully we have raised the profile of bonsai in the local community and may see a few new members in the new year.

Many thanks to Bunnings for the invitation, the refreshments served to our volunteers on the day, and for the donation of a gift voucher to the Club.



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AABC Convention 2025

The Association of Australian Bonsai Clubs 2025 National Convention will be held in Canberra from 16th to 19th May 2025, hosted by the Canberra Bonsai Society. Featured international artists will be from USA - Jennifer Price from Chicago and Michael Hagedorn from Portland. In addition, three Australian artists will be on the program as demonstrators—Jarryd Bailey from Tasmania, Sam Thompson from the NBP-CA in Canberra, and Marcela Ferreira from Melbourne. The venue will be the Canberra Rex Hotel and the National Arboretum. Members are encouraged to consider attending the Convention to improve their bonsai knowledge, and as a side benefit to view the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection at the Arboretum.

Full registration fee is \$395. Note that places are limited due to venue size, so anybody wanting to attend is advised to book as soon as possible.

Further information is available at https://www.canberrabonsai.club/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=139:2025-aabc-bonsai-convention-3&catid=85&Itemid=2374



Kudos, Accolades and Thanks

- Thanks to Bunnings Lilydale for donating a gift voucher for Club use following the Christmas Celebration display.
- Thanks to Seasol Australia for donating the Seasol product hamper as a raffle prize during our Bonsai Show.

End-Of-Month Saturday Workshop

Note—NO Last Saturday of the Month Workshop in December due to the holiday season!

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.

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.

Right - Members at work at the Saturday Workshop.



Federal Election 2025

All members please note—A Federal Election is due in the first half of 2025, and our venue at the Chirnside Park Community Hub will be an election and pre-polling centre. This Federal booking takes precedence over all normal bookings at the Hub, so depending on the actual date that the election is called, we may need to relocate or cancel some of our activities.

All members will be notified of any changes to our syllabus or location as soon as details are known.

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Tree Profiles

Please remember that all Tree Profiles are available on our web site (www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au) for convenient download by members and others. Go to our website, click on the "..." button, and then on "Tree Profiles" on the drop-down list. The pictured screen will appear, and scrolling down will display the Tree Profiles available for download as PDF files.

We will continue to generate new profiles as the opportunity arises. If any members wish to contribute information on new species, this will be very welcome!



Introduction to Bonsai Training Course 2025

The next "Introduction to Bonsai" Training Course will be held on Saturday 3rd May and Saturday 24th May, from 9am to 1pm both days. All registrants will receive a tree to work on and a comprehensive training booklet comprising all course notes. Course fee is \$100.

This course will cover all of the basic bonsai knowledge required to confidently start your bonsai journey, and the notes provide a ready reference to consult as you move forward.

Most current members have participated in the course at some time during their time with the club.

Contact Lindsay H (linhad14@gmail.com, 0403 800 671) to book your place, or put your name down on the registration form at any Club meeting or workshop. Note—minimum numbers will apply.



Above - The 2024 Course participants.

Scott Martin Workshop

We have secured the services of noted local bonsai professional Scott Martin from Bonsai Matsu for two events in early 2025.

Firstly, he will be our special guest presenter at the club meeting in February where he will conduct a workshop on junipers. Bring along a juniper to work on if you have one, otherwise come along and watch Scott and the other members as they work on their trees. Scott clearly evaluates each tree and describes the work required, for the benefit of the owner as well as all observers. Should be a great night!

On Saturday 8th February (the Saturday prior to our normal meeting), Scott will also conduct Tutored Workshops, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, at the Chimside Park Hub. At these workshops, members should bring along any one or two of their trees that may require Scott's expertise and assistance on improving their design and styling. Take your tree to the next level! Scott is an excellent teacher and communicator, and participants will not be disappointed.

Bookings for the Tutored Workshops are essential, and the cost is \$50 per session. Limited to 8 places at each workshop so all participants can receive due attention.

Contact Lindsay H (linhad14@gmail.com, 0403 800 671) to book your place.





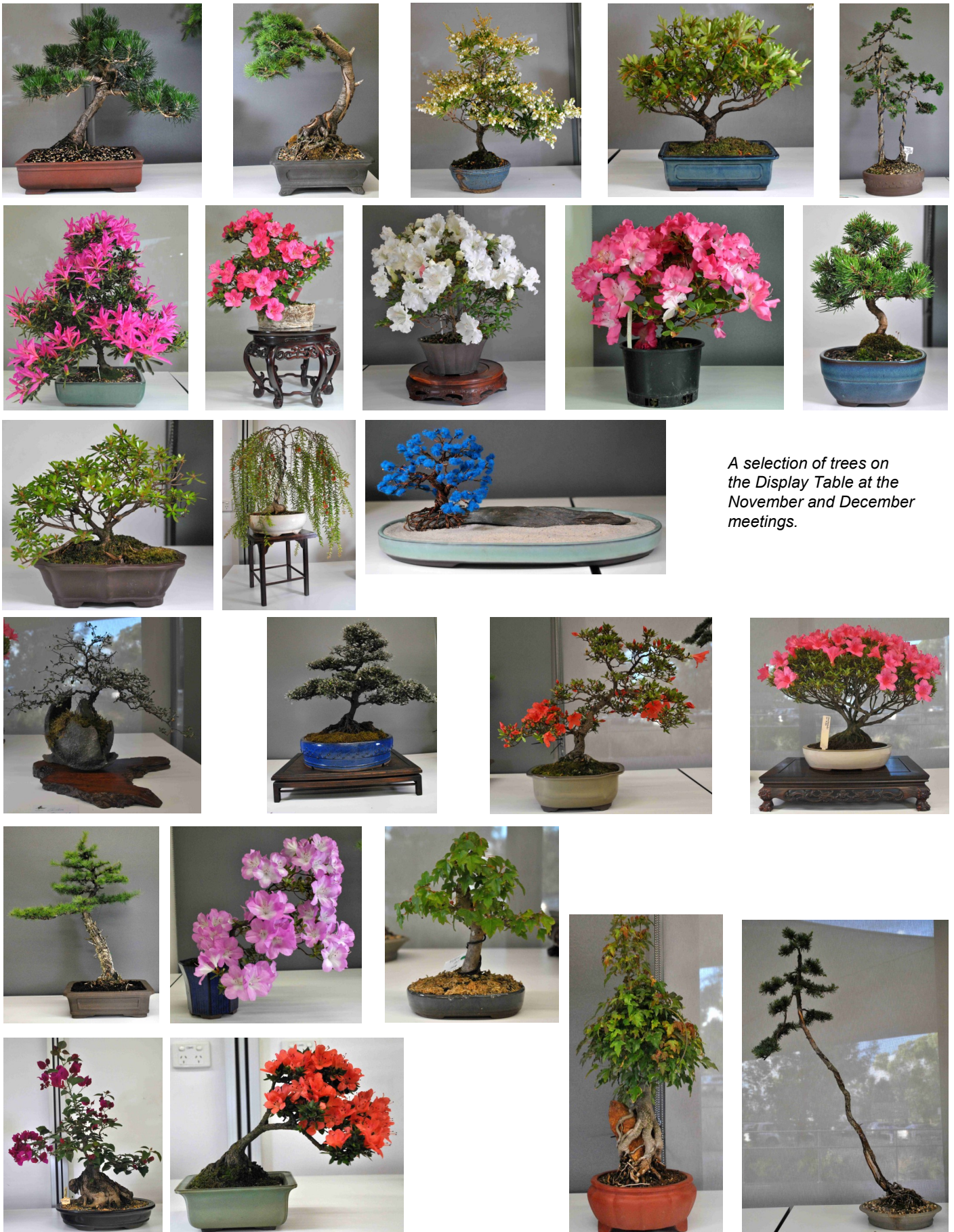
Dean Shaw (Deano)

deano@bonsairoots.com.au

To Order OR Enquiries:
Call / Text: 0409 848 435



On The Display Table



A selection of trees on the Display Table at the November and December meetings.

Bonsai Calendar: January - February

Watering and Position should be the main focus during the summer months. It's a good time of year to be on the safe side when it comes to caring for your trees.

Watering

- Water evenly and thoroughly. This will encourage roots to grow at the bottom of the pot improving the health of the tree.
- Water in the mornings. If this is not possible, water in the evenings but avoid wetting the foliage on species that are susceptible to mildew (Maples, Oaks, Crepe Myrtles). Note that on exceptionally hot days, some of your trees may need watering twice or even three times, to maintain optimum health.
- Bonsai that will require more water: Maples, Camellias, Azaleas, Liquidambar, Elms, Wisterias, Alders, Taxodiums, Beeches, Hornbeams, Pyracanthas, Banksias, Melaleucas, other natives
- Bonsai that will require less water: Pines, Cedars, Corokias,
- It can be a good idea to separate your trees into categories based on their watering needs.

Position

- Morning sun is best. Avoid the afternoon sun in summer. If you have to make a choice and put some trees in the afternoon sun, then most conifers and natives can handle these conditions the best.
- Consider the species and pot size when arranging your display. Take extra care when using small or shallow pots as they will dry out quickly.
- Species such as Beech, Hornbeam, Maples, Spruce will scorch if not protected from both the sun and the wind.
- When looking for shade, avoid placing bonsai directly under garden trees. Pests and diseases can be passed to your bonsai.

Summer is a great time to work on your benches, watering systems, shade cloth and weed around your display. If you are going away for the holidays, put some serious thought into how your trees will be looked after. Many bonsai are lost over this time of year.



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Volume 5 No 81
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December 2024

Page 8

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
January & February 2025*



The monthly meeting on Tuesday 14th January at 7:30pm will be a workshop night. Bring along your trees to work on, advice and assistance will be available from senior members if required. Display table theme—"Australian Natives", and Member's Choice.



The Last Saturday of the Month Workshops is on Saturday 25th January from 1:00pm to 4:00pm.



Tutored Workshops with Scott Martin of Bonsai Matsu will be held on Saturday 8th February, the morning session starting at 9am and the afternoon session at 1pm. Both at the Chirside Park Hub. Bookings are essential.



The monthly meeting on Tuesday 11th February at 7:30pm will be an "Interactive Workshop on Junipers" led by special guest presenter Scott Martin from Bonsai Matsu. Bring along your juniper to work on under Scott's guidance, or watch and learn from Scott as he assists others. Display table theme—"Junipers", and Member's Choice.



The Last Saturday of the Month Workshops is on Saturday 22nd February from 1:00pm to 4:00pm.



Other Events



The Satsuki Azalea Interest Group will hold a meeting on Saturday 15th February at 1:30pm at Bosai Art Nursery, 236 Old Dandenong Road, Heatherton. All welcome, \$2 entry.

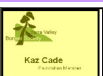


YVBS 2025 Wall Calendar featuring selected pictures of members' trees from the 2024 Show is now available. \$10 each. Purchase at any meeting or workshop, or contact Lindsay H (linhad14@gmail.com 0403 800 671) to arrange prior delivery.



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