



Bonsai Society of Sydney **NEWSLETTER**

Meetings are held on the 4th Saturday of each month February-November from 1pm at the Forest Community Arts Centre, No. 6 Darley Street, Forestville, NSW 2087 (subject to change).

www.bonsaisocietysydney.org.au

Next Meeting: February 24, 2024, 1.00-4.00 pm See you there

A Member of:

- The Bonsai Federation of Australia Inc.
- Association of Australian Bonsai Clubs Ltd.
- Garden Clubs of Australia Inc.
- Koryu Shoyo-Kai Group

February-March 2024

No. 138

Welcome to 2024! Another big year is planned for the BSS!

President's Report

Hello BSS Members,

Well, that's another year gone. Welcome to 2024!

Our committee met recently to formulate and plan all of the events for this coming year and I hope you enjoy the itinerary we have planned. There is still a bit of fine tuning for the program, but we will keep everyone informed beforehand of any changes.

Our first meeting at Forest Community Arts Centre, Forestville is on February 24th with myself talking and doing a demonstration with figs and also have a "Show and Tell", so bring along any figs to work on and maybe talk about to our other members.

Our annual Bonsai Exhibition will be a one day show on August 17th, with setting up on the Friday,, we will need a lot of help from our members to set up on the Friday and dismantle on the Saturday, so please keep these dates in mind to volunteer.

Our exciting news for 2024 is the BSS will organise another Bonsai Exhibition and Ikebana Exhibition by Megumi and members at the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney from Friday 13th-Sunday 15th September. We will need your help volunteering to make the exhibition successful again. Setting up on Thursday 12th and dismantle on Monday 16th. We will keep everyone informed as our plan progresses. Let us know if you wish to help.

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So this summer in Sydney has been the usual mix of very hot, humid, showery, windy, rainy days as per usual. During this time your bonsai trees will need more than the average care: watering, maintenance and pest management especially (see Alex's Seasonal Notes inside for more information). If there is any bonsai topic you would like to see discussed, e.g. aerial layering, please see one of the Committee and we will place it on our agenda. We also have an extensive and growing library of

books and magazines for members to borrow, only recently more books have been donated for our use. Don't forget! Keep the water up for your bonsais. That's all for now!

– Cheers, Galen.



One of Megumi's azalea bonsais in flower at spring.

NEXT MEETING: February 24 at 1 pm: Fig demonstration by Galen and a Show and Tell. Bring along a fig bonsai to work on and talk about it.

Defoliation of my Ficus microcarpa

I recently defoliated my *Ficus microcarpa* (native to mostly tropical Asia and parts of northern Australia), defoliation of figs can be done from the middle of October to the end of February in temperate climates.

The reason for defoliation is to force the plant to produce new leaves and they should grow back in a reduced size, this is done yearly or twice yearly depending how early the first defoliation is done and the weather conditions. In our summers with high temperatures and wet season plus fertiliser these plants grow very vigorously.

I normally wait for the plant to recover its leaves before I repot it, I do not want to stress the tree out too much. After defoliation I give a drenching of Seasol and half strength of Nitrosol to help recovery. I cut the stalk behind the leaf, leaving about 5 mm of the petiole (leaf stalk) so a new leaf can form between the branch of the tree and the petiole.

I usually leave the smallest and newest leaves on the tree and remove any large and damaged ones. Once they are all removed I can study the tree and decide what branches need removing, also chop off any upward and down pointing ones.

By viewing the tree from the top I can see the branches all radiate out, the design resembling spokes on a bicycle wheel, which is the effect I am trying to achieve with the tree.

I can then restyle the branches of the tree to bring it back into a triangular shape, I do not want the branches overlapping or to be too near to each other.

Also I restyle each of the branches doing the same method, shaping them into a triangular shape.

Once completed I can then rewire the branches to bend them into the desired shape required, appearing like an open hand, fingers outstretched.

I have had my microcarpa tree for about 20 odd years, being about 5 years old when I first potted it. It was just a straight stick about 250 mm long when



Defoliation photos before removal of leaves (left) and all of the larger leaves cut off.

I acquired it. I have done just about everything to it: neglected it for long periods; forgotten to water it; leave wire on for long periods; and everything else, except poisoning it, still it survives.

I had a nice crop of about 40-50 pea-sized fig fruit on the tree last November, some purple ripe, others still green, I noticed one morning they had all vanished. Possums came down during the night and ate the lot, you can see from the photo below they are now growing back, not as many as I had on the tree before.

These trees love humidity and plenty of water, I keep it in a semi-shaded area and it keeps it happy. – Keith Gallie.





The tree is now open to style the branches, shaped like spokes on a wheel.

Leaves are removed with about 5 mm of stem remaining.



The author lost in deep concentration defoliating his Ficus microcarpa.

Visiting the AABC Convention in Brisbane

The 36th AABC National Bonsai Convention for 2024 will be hosted this year by the Bonsai Society of Queensland from May 17th to 20th, 2024 in Brisbane, Queensland.

The event will be held at the Royal on the Park Hotel, Brisbane City.

To find out more and register for the convention please go to www.bonsaisocietyald.asn.au.

You will have to arrange your own accommodation in the many hotels in Brisbane.

There will be a tour on Friday to visit Brisbane's largest nursery, Australian Bonsai Grower in the morning before visiting the Botanical Gardens for lunch in the Gardens Cafe before touring the new Bonsai House and Bonsai Collection housed within the gardens, there will be a presentation on the history of the collection, then afternoon tea before a tour of the Australian Native Garden to see more species in their natural bush setting.





Mr Koji Hiramatsu with Megumi doing a Japanese black pine demonstration and workshop at Belrose when he visited Australia in July 2019.

Saturday and Sunday are the main Convention days, with a full program of activities, demonstrations on both days with a host of different bonsai masters to showcase their work. Full registration includes all daytime activities on the program, morning and afternoon teas and lunch.

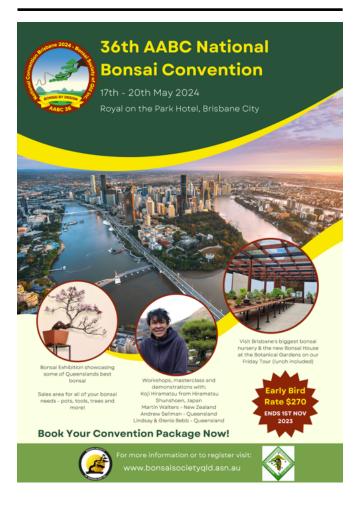
Optional activities include Friday night Welcome Reception, Friday Tour and there is a Saturday Night Dinner, these will incur additional costs.

The demonstrators invited for the Convention are: Koji Hiramatsu from Shunshoen Japan, Martin Walters from New Zealand, Andrew Sellman from Queensland, Lindsay and Glenis Bebb also from Queensland.

There will be an advanced workshop starting on the Friday with Koji Hiramatsu and Martin Walters, limiteds to 10 people only, then come workshops continuing on the Monday when the Convention has finished.

These are more for people who can bring their trees along and receive professional help to work on their bonsai. There are opportunities for observers to look on at additional cost.

These conventions are always a delight to attend, meeting old friends and making new friends and other bonsai enthusiasts, learning new bonsai methods and gaining more knowledge on how to create a better bonsai and to enhance your trees.



Guide to Bonsai size classification		
Name	Dimensions	Size class
	Miniature size	
Keishi bonsai	Up to 2.5 cms (1 inch)	Seed size
Shito bonsai	Up to 7.5 cms (3 inches)	Fingertip size
Mame bonsai	Up to 15 cms (6 inches)	Palm size
	Medium size	
Shohin bonsai	Up to 20 cms (8 inches)	One handed size
Kifu Sho bonsai	Up to 40.5 cms (16 inches)	Two handed size
Chu bonsai	Up to 61 cms (24 inches)	Two handed size
Large size		
Dai bonsai	Up to 101 cms (40 inches)	Four handed size
Imperial bonsai	Above 122 cms (48 inches)	Eight handed size



Price of posting out Newsletters has increased

Please note: The posting out of Newsletters has increased from January I, 2024 due to the cost of stamps, paper and other printing expenses.

The new fee will be \$20 to post the Newsletters out.

Membership fees remain the same at Single Membership \$35 and Family Membership \$40. Please add \$20 for posting out of Newsletters.



<u>Seasonal Notes February-March 2024</u> <u>by Alex Bennett – Late summer/Early Autumn care</u>

It's been a rather rainy and hot and humid summer that we have had.

Watering

Although the leaves are not growing as actively, the roots are still actively growing and are very busy absorbing water to keep the plant in good condition and hydrated. So, it is important that the soil remains moist at all times.

At this time of year, the days are still quite warm but the nights are becoming cooler. These weather changes may affect how often you need to water your plants. So, watch your trees closely and if you're not sure if your trees needs water, water it anyway. Just remember the tree will only ever receive water from two sources the sky or your watering can. So, when you do water, water it well. Ensure you water from the top and keep drenching your tree until water flows from the bottom of the pot. Try not to measure the amount of water.

Repotting

At this time of year, you can still be repotting all natives and tropical trees safely. It is still a bit too hot to be repotting your pines yet. You can start repotting your conifers and deciduous trees now. However, the amount of roots you cut off will be dependent on how early in the season you wish to start. If your soil has blackened in colour, which means it has root rot onset, you can wash the soil off with your hose on jet. Ask your teacher if you are unfamiliar with this technique.

Fertilising

From mid-February it is OK to start fertilising again. I recommend alternating fortnightly or monthly, your usual and regular nitrogen based fertiliser with lower nitrogen (N), higher potassium (K) and if possible higher phosphorus (K) ratio like Thrive® flowers, Blood and Bone or Bloom booster, etc.

This can be mixed at the recommended dosage with your seaweed concentrate and applied at two week intervals. This lower nitrogen to higher potassium ratio will slow down new leaf development and stimulate the trunk and branches to thicken and store nutrients during winter for the spring flush of growth. Be wary of using the same fertiliser all the time; every time doing the same trees like evergreens, I have noticed some bonsai go yellow from lack of nitrogen. Strange but true.

Pruning and wiring

Deciduous and flowering trees

Trim away any leaves that have been burnt during the hot days of summer. Do not cut off the healthy leaves. If some of your trees have become overgrown and out of shape during summer, be patient and wait until March.

Then you can cut them back and soft wire the branches to restore their shape. **Note:** soft wire is when you wire only the branches that need shaping. Avoid heavy wiring of the trunks or thick branches. It is liable to snap like celery.

Conifers

With your conifers such as Juniperus squamata prostrata, (Himalayan juniper), Juniperus x media Shimpaku (Shimpaku juniper), keep pinching back the tips and remove any dead foliage with your fingertips. By cleaning up the dead and yellowing foliage, you will allow more light in between the branches. This will keep the branches strong and prevent insects from nesting in the dead areas. If need

be, if you have any wire still on the tree from the previous year it is now the time to remove it. The branches are thickening and you don't want the wire to cut in.

Pests and diseases

Improper diagnosis of pest and disease can cause more damage than good. I will give you a rundown of the more common pests and how to treat them.

Scale

Usually small, can be black, white, brown, pink. They can be hard shelled or soft shelled. Isolated they appear to do little damage. But in colonies, they cause discolouration, black sooty mould greying of leaves; a telltale sign is ants can be seen feeding on them and running up and down branches.

Pest oil®, White oil®, Eco Neem®, Scale Gun and Eco oil® are the best products. Avoid using on days of heat and before rain and spray the entire leaf area until dripping wet and **always read the instructions before use**. If you are still uncertain how to use properly please consult a Horticultural expert. Some plants are more sensitive to the horticultural oil than others. Conifers and pines don't respond well to the horticultural oils but will accept Eco Neem for example.

Azalea lace bug

Insects are small black shiny bugs whilst in description their damage is not. They sit very close to the veins of the leaves. They attack azaleas and may attack maples occasionally. Extremely damaging and fast. The damage on the leaves is silvery grey and speckled.

Bug Killa® and Conguard® and its Imaclorporid equivalent is the most effective. However due to their quick breeding nature it is the best to treat straight away. **Read instructions before use.**

Mealy bug

Small, white and fluffy and can attack the leaves and needles of pines, very stubborn to remove.

Mealy bugs can also attack the roots. These particular ones are extremely hard to notice until you repot your tree. There are two ways I treat them. **One**: remove all soil using water on a jet spray and a pair of chopsticks. **Two:** purchase a Confidor® tablet or Bug Killa® granules. These are very specific insecticides, apply and water the roots. **Read instructions before use.**

Confidor®, Eco Neem oil®, Bug killa® are effective against mealy bug,

Mites syn., Red spider mites

Microscopic arachnid bug that causes a lot of damage very quickly on the foliage. The mites attach themselves to not only the bottom but also the top of the foliage causing yellow and army green speckling foliage on the tips and adult leaves. Another sign is poor growth in comparison to other areas that have been not affected.

The damage is quite indiscriminate. The insects are very active when the prevailing weather is hot and dry. So while wetting the foliage on the regular basis may not eliminate the bug, it can disrupt and slow down the bug from forming colonies.

This bug is extremely difficult to eliminate so repeated treatment would be required.

I use Eco Neem® which is safe for conifers and pines. The dosage is to MIX 5ml TO 1l OF WATER EVERY TWO WEEKS. HOWEVER I RECOMMEND **READING THE INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE USE.**



KORYU SHOYO-KAI Group Ikebana News IKEBANA CLASSES Enjoy the art of Japanese flower arrangement with Megumi Bennett, Principal. Classes are held on the fourth Sunday of each month beginning in February until November.

History of Ikebana – part 1

Ikebana is the "Art of Japanese Flower Arrangement". Ike means to arrange and bana means flowers. The word of "Bana", its pronunciation has changed from "Hana". It is easy to say ikebana than ikehana.

The origin of ikebana can be traced back to the 6th century and is associated with Buddhism.

However ancient Japanese admired the beauty of its nature which is believed to be the spirit of Gods and Goddists live in everything in nature, which is the religion called "Shinto".

The origin of ikebana is an upright form, arranged Lotus leaves and flowers. The arrangement can be



The Great Buddha of Nara, standing in the middle of Tadai-ji temple, the vase is alongside and has Lotus flowers representing Ikebana.



Jo-Anna's moribana, Peppercorn, Christmas Bells.

seen in front of the image of Buddha in Todaiji temple in Nara prefecture **(see photos attached)**. Ancients offered flowers to Buddha wishing for their good health and happiness.

Part 2 will continue next Newsletter.

– Megumi, Head of Koryu Shoyo-Kai School.



Megumi's moribana arrangement, Calla lily and Juncus (tall grass) using driftwood as a container.



Kumiko's moribana, European Beech and pin cushions.

7 – February-March 2024



Nageire by Stephanie, Smoke Bush and red Roses using a tall container.



Tanya's Moribana, Star of Bethlehem (white flowers) and Christmas Morison (yellow flowers).



Nageire by Kerry, Japanese Black Pine and Hydrangeas.

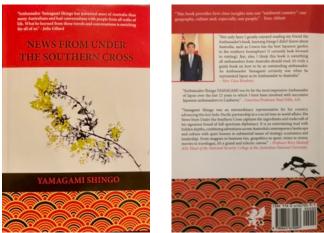


Small moribana by Lynda, consisting of Bromeliad and leaves displayed in a square vase.

Mr Shingo Yamagami has written a book

Mr Shingo Yamagami, former Japanese Ambassador to Australia, has written a book about his time and experiences when he was appointed as ambassador. The name of the book is "News From Under the Southern Cross."

Megumi, her family and her bonsai nursery are mentioned in the book. Mr and Mrs Yamagami visited the nursery at Belrose in March 2022 (pages 215-217). Mr Yamagami mentions in the book he likes bonsai and commented on the beautiful bonsai and the work that is done at her nursery.



Front and back covers of Mr Yamagami's new book titled "News From Under the Southern Cross."

Mr Yamagami opened our Bonsai exhibition at The Calyx, RBG, Sydney in September 2023. He enjoyed seeing so many beautiful bonsai displayed. He also receives our BSS newsletter after moving to Japan. We would like to keep our relationship with him.

For anyone interested in purchasing this book it may be obtained from Manticore Press, please contact: https://amzn.asia/d/euZ5UJy for more details.



Mr Yamagami with Megumi, Brian and Alex visiting her nursery at Belrose in 2022.

MEGUMI'S BONSAI CLASSES 2024

Megumi teaches intermediate and advanced students. Schedule of classes:

1st Saturday: 9 am-11 am (2H) OR 11.30 am (2.5H).

2nd Saturday: 9 am-11 am (2H) OR 11.30 am (2.5H) and 1 pm-3 pm (2H) OR 3.30 pm.

3rd Sunday of the month AM Class: 9 am-11 am OR 11.30 am. **PM Class:** 1 pm-3 pm OR 3.30 pm.

Every Monday (except 5th): 9 am-11 am OR 11.30 am and 1 pm-3 pm.

3rd Wednesday: 9 am-11 am OR 11.30 am.

BEGINNERS BONSAI WORKSHOP HELD EVERY MONTH: ONE OFF LESSON.

IKEBANA CLASSES HELD EVERY 4TH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH.

Beginners start at 1 pm.

Further information please contact Megumi 0432 680 331 or

Email: <u>bennettmegumi@gmail.com</u> Web: <u>www.bonsaisydney.com.au</u>

BONSAI BEGINNERS COURSE 2024 WITH ALEX

The learning Basics are very important to understanding about bonsai.

The classes consist of 10 lessons in which 4 bonsai are created.

Starts from February to November.

Time: 2 hours duration. **Tuition:** \$310 including GST and bonsai notes. Closing date is 1st Feb., 2023.

Tuition fee is non-refundable after the commencement of classes.

Class A: 4th Saturday of the month, 9 am-11 am.

Class B: 2nd Sunday of the month, 11.30 am-1.30 pm.

If you are interested, please contact us or go to our Website for more information.

> Email: <u>alexbe.415@gmail.com</u> Web: <u>www.bonsaisydney.com.au</u> Mobile: 0423 763 506

Hurry, we only have a few club shirts remaining



There are approximately eight polo club shirts left for sale in various sizes.

If we receive enough requests for more shirts we can order more for next year.

Please contact Megumi for more information about these shirts.



Bonsai Reshaped is our annual celebration of the art of bonsai.

This year we welcome internationally recognised artists Marija Hajdic from Croatia and Morten Albek from Denmark, to share their expertise, influences, experiences and enthusiasm through workshops and live demonstrations

Both professional artists carry the legacy of the bonsai masters into the future whilst developing and exploring the boundaries of the artform



11 - 14 April 2024 Scan for tickets or visit nationalarboretum.act.gov.au Bonsai After Dark Friday 12 April | 6pm - 10pm

Celebrate the beauty and artistry of bonsai as the sun goes down with live demonstrations, tours of the collection, Shohin display auctions and more Bonsai Workshops

11, 13 & 14 April | Times vary

For everyone from beginners to the experienced Bonsai Markets

12 - 14 April | 9am - 4pm

Pick up everything you need to start or expand your collection, from stock trees to styled bonsai, pots, wire and tools.



Membership fees are now overdue

Fees for membership were due by January 1, 2024. Please complete an application form with your contact details and return it to the Treasurer.

It is important we receive your application form and your payment to make sure your contact details are correct.

Please take a photograph of the application form and send it to the Treasurer by email. Payment can be made by direct debit to our bank account or by cheque or cash at Bonsai Art Pty. Ltd. (details on application form). Please include a reference, e.g. name, so we know who the payment is from.

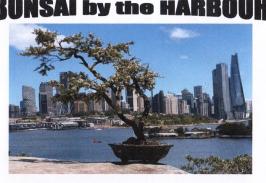
Please let us know . . .

... if any of your contact details have altered recently then please notify us.

We need to have this updated information to keep in contact to send out newsletters and notifications to our members.

Any changes please contact Richard Chaplin at rac@kintford.com.au, or Keith Gallie at keithgallie@bigpond.com, or Megumi Bennett at bennettmegumi@gmail.com.

Bonsai Federation of Australia Northern Inc Invites you to a weekend of



A unique program will be presented with multiple demonstrations and workshops

Saturday will feature Marcela Ferreira (Victorian Native Bonsai Club), Grant Bowie (Canberra) doing interactive demonstrations and workshops. Alan Peck (Newcastle Bonsai Society) will be doing a demonstration. A group of 8 people will be discussing their bonsai trees.

Sunday will feature demonstrations and workshops with Marcela Ferreira and Hugh Grant (Tree Makers Bonsai Co) Megumi Bennett (Bonsai Art Nursery - Bonsai Society of Sydney) will be doing a demonstration.

A Silent Auction and Raffle will be held on Saturday and Sunday. Sale Tables will feature handmade pots.

Saturday & Sunday 8th & 9th June 2024 Sydney Church of England Grammar School's Rowing Facility 86 Wharf Road, Gladesville NSW 2111

Enquiries: Garry 0425320394 (email gueberga@gmail.com) Denise 02 94987355 (email denise_edgerton@hotmail.com)

Bonsai Society of Sydney - 2024 Club Calendar - Subject to change

2024	Workshop/Topic	Description
February 24th, 2024	Fig workshop and demonstration	Fig demonstration and Show and Tell with Galen and workshop. Bring your figs along to work on and talk about them.
March 23rd, 2024	Azalea workshop with Simon	A workshop on azaleas as bonsai and demonstration by Simon.
April 27th, 2024	Andrew Edge	Andrew Edge demonstration.
May 25, 2024	Japanese Black Pine	Alex will talk and do a demonstration on Japanese Black Pines.
June 22, 2024	Evan Marsh	Demonstration by Evan Marsh.

Important Dates – 2024, Calendar of Events – Subject to change

2024	Event/Exhibition	Details
February 16-18, 2024	Bonsai Expo	Mid North Coast Bonsai Expo, Club Taree, Fri. 12 pm-7 pm, Sat. 10 am-5 pm, Sun. 10 am-3 pm, 121 Wingham Road, Taree.
April 6-7, 2024	Bonsai Open	Central Coast Bonsai Club, Club Macquarie, Argenton.
April 11-14, 2024	Bonsai Reshaped	Bonsai Reshaped is an annual celebration of the art of bonsai with international artists sharing their expertise. At the National Arboretum, Canberra.
May 17-20 May, 2024	AABC National Bonsai Convention	36th AABC National Bonsai Convention, Royal on the Park Hotel, Brisbane.



Bonsai Society



A Member of:

- ✤ The Bonsai Federation of Australia Inc.
- * Association of Australian Bonsai Clubs Ltd.
- ✤ Garden Clubs of Australia Inc.

Club meetings are held on the fourth Saturday of each month from February to November from 1 pm at the Forest Community Arts Centre, No. 6 Darley Street, Forestville, NSW 2087 (subject to change).

Web: www.bonsaisocietysydney.org.au

Mail: Bonsai Society of Sydney Inc., P.O. Box 186, Terrey Hills, NSW 2084.

Bonsai Society of Sydney Committee 2024		
Honorary Patron	Megumi Bennett	bennettmegumi@gmail.com
President	Galen Gannon	gig45@bigpond.com
Vice President	Diane C.	
Secretary	Alex Bennett	alexbe.415@gmail.com
Treasurer	Richard Chaplin	rac@kintford.com.au
Newsletter Editor	Keith Gallie	keithgallie@bigpond.com
Committee Member	Jocelyn M.	
Committee Member	Christophe C.	
Committee Member	Michael S.	
Committee Member		

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BONSAI SOCIETY OF SYDNEY INC. Membership Application Form 2024

Full Name:	
Residential Address:	
	Postcode:
Telephone: Home:	
Mobile:	
E-mail:	@
Annual Members	hip fee:
Newsletter via Email:	Single Member \$35 Family Member \$40
Newsletter via Post:	Add \$20 for postage Members joining after 1st July \$17.50
Total amount payable	\$
As a Member of the B Society.	Bonsai Society of Sydney Inc., I/we agree to abide by the constitution of the
Signed:	Date: / /
Direct Debit:	Cash (enclose securely with form) BSB 012-298 Account No: 499616428 ble to: "Bonsai Society of Sydney"
For Direct D	Debit record your Name in the Description/Reference field.
Payment Method:	Direct Debit Reference/Name
	Cash (with form)
Please post Applic	ation Form to:
	The Treasurer
	Bonsai Society of Sydney Inc. PO Box 186, Terrey Hills 2084
— — — — — — – Treasurer's use only	