



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Members,

"A GOLDEN CELEBRATION"

"Celebration" - a joyful occasion for special festivities to mark some happy event. This is according to the Oxford dictionary.

This event celebrates our 50th year teaching and sharing the knowledge of bonsai and also for our upcoming convention to be held on the 15th – 18th of May at the Bankstown Sports Club. See our website for details.

2020 also marks the birth of a new decade.

Welcome back everyone to another year of bonsai and a special one at that for our club as it is our 50th anniversary – a milestone to be celebrated and embraced.

The weather has not been kind to us over the holidays to us or to our trees together with the added burden of water restrictions. We have all been trying to be vigilant and have tried to do the best for them by saving any water wherever we can, moving the more delicate trees to some semi-shade and putting trays under the more robust trees in full sun to catch any water run-off. Watering very early in the morning or as late as possible in the late afternoon/early evening is the best way to keep them hydrated. Not only were the restrictions a problem, it was the very hot dry winds that caused most of the damage – leaves becoming dry and crisp and burning the bark on some trees. Windburn on trees is just as big a problem as having full hot sun on the foliage and having no water.

If you have experienced dry burnt leaves, scratch the bark (cambium layer) and if it is green, you may be in luck - cut off the burnt leaves only, place the tree in a more protected site and keep watering. Most trees will 'pop' back with a little tender care and remember NO FEEDING – never, ever feed a sick or damaged tree.

I went away for a week over Christmas, and what I did to a few of my more precious large trees that couldn't be moved, I placed a thick covering of damp/wet sphagnum moss (about 3-4 cms thick) over the surface, but not near the trunk. I asked my son to come and check on them during the week and it was successful and when I got back they did not deteriorate one single bit.

During those horrific fires and heatwave, a couple of my friends lost everything they owned with the fires. One man, an ex-member of our club retired down the south coast to Yatte Yattah near the Lake Conjola turnoff. Frank and his family moved down there to start a hobby nursery/bonsai nursery in their retirement with his wife running a fantastic café. His nursery became a tourist attraction, not only for the wonderful garden and bonsai stock he kept but it was the café with his wife's fabulous food selection that made it compulsory to stop there everytime you ventured south! The fires destroyed the lot and I was very saddened when I heard as I remembered when I would visit them often when I had a caravan at Lake Conjola or when I was venturing further south.

The other tragedy was my friend who lives at Wingello (southern highlands) and after her divorce she

Secretary:

Julie Smith
95246550

secretary@illawarrabonsaisociety.org

President:

Brenda Parker
0412 384 834

info@illawarrabonsaisociety.org

Editor:

Rupert Mathews
0424 276 739

rupert.m@bigpond.com

Mail:

PO Box 4736, Sylvania Waters, NSW,
2224

Web:

www.illawarrabonsaisociety.org

Meetings:

7.30pm third Monday night each
month, except January & December
at Gynea Community Centre,
Gynea Bay Road, Gynea, NSW

moved there to start a new life. Her home burnt to the ground and when I saw the 'before' and 'after' photos of her house I was so upset for her.

Of course these two tragedies did upset me but they are all safe at least, and it was the tragic news of all the people and fire fighters who lost their lives, plus all the hundreds of thousands of animals who perished that caused headlines all around the world which seemed unbelievable but true!!!!

It has not been a typical happy and relaxing Australian summer that we all know, but we can only move forward and look to the future – oh!!! and pray for some good rain to fill our dams!!!! Since writing this we have had a 'bit' of rain but it came all at once coupled with the horrific thunderstorms and hail as well which caused a lot of damagewe can't seem to be able to win!!

Till next time,
Brenda

FINAL THOUGHT

'A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken.'

James Dent

HANDY HINTS

- For the trees that did do okay over the holidays keep up the extra attention they require with watering and feeding.
- If you have defoliated the more delicate trees like all the maples etc. keep a sharp eye on them so they don't get bark-burn or you can move them to a more semi-shaded area and wait for their new leaves to harden off.
- No need to worry about defoliated figs, they love the heat so leave them where they belong – in full sun.
- With this summer heat, young scales (or 'crawlers' as they are called), are starting to mature and move up on the branches of a lot of trees, especially under or near the petioles of leaves. When young they are nearly transparent and hard to see unless you investigate closely then when they mature they become either black, brown, pink or white. These must be either removed by hand or sprayed to eradicate them. A systemic spray is the best. They will suck the goodness out of the leaves and may cause die back on the branches.
- All native trees should be standing in trays of water as well as other trees that love water e.g. crabapples, wisteria, serissas etc.
- All junipers should have their foliage kept trimmed at this time to allow for proper air movement and for the sun to penetrate through all the branches to keep all the foliage pads healthy. If this is not done the bottom branches will become weak with the risk of losing them. When I did mine recently, I found lots of insects and small spiders hiding within these foliage pads trying to escape the heat so beware and wear gloves. When complete always spray the foliage as well when you water.
- Cleaning out any dead needles on pines and cutting the candles should be done now if this is your 'recipe' that you follow for these trees. Also if you have excess needles 'pluck' them randomly to allow the sun to stimulate new buds and doing this will also remove any insects as in the junipers that are hiding.
- Stop pruning azaleas now as the flower buds will be starting to form at the end of the branches. Feed with potassium from now on up until May to improve the amount and of course for healthy flowers.
- Keep trimming the foliage back on Chinese elms, privets, serissas, bougainvilleas, jaboticabas, star jasmine (trachelospermum), lavender star (Grewia), crabapples, taxodiums (swamp cypress) etc. Of course don't forget the native trees like baekeas, kunzias, tea trees, water gums, lilly pillys, bottlebrush (callistemon). If after defoliating and repotting figs, if they have lots of leaf growth it is safe to cut back and leave 2-3 leaves on every branch. This will improve ramification and not leave you with very long branches with only a couple of leaves at the very end of them. All figs can be treated in this way e.g. Port Jackson, Little Ruby, willow leaf (Nerifolia) etc. and because they love the heat they must be done now.

- Since writing these previous notes, we have now had too much rain all at once and as the sun returns so do the weeds which need removing and the branches on all trees need to be trimmed to keep their bonsai safe. Also the soil in these smallish pots have been leached of all or if any that was left in the pots, so feed each tree that requires their own special attention. Because everything now have their 'mojo' back, try to spend time giving them what they want – trimming, feeding, moving in or out of sun and OH!! go to sleep with pruners in your hands in preparation for the next day's onslaught!!!

TREE COMPETITION –2019 RESULTS

Large	1 st	Garry Uebergang	
	2 nd	Mark Patterson	
	3 rd	James Sharmoon	
Medium	1 st	Paul Shergold	
	2 nd	Julie Smith	
	2 nd	Garry Uebergang	
	2 nd	Elaine Bleazard	
	2 nd	Ric Roberts	
Shohin	3 rd	Ben Thomas	
	1 st	Noel Summerell	
	2 nd	Garry Uebergang	
Mame	3 rd	Brenda Parker	
	1 st	Noel Summerell	
	2 nd	Garry Uebergang	
Novice	3 rd	Brenda Parker	
	1 st	Manfred Koch	
	2 nd	Leesha Cook	
Elain Chee trophy	3 rd	Leisa Preen	
		Garry Uebergang	
Noel Summerell trophy		Julie Smith	

EVENTS

Club Meetings	
17 February 2020	Demonstration by Neutrog
16 March 2020	Workshop, and demonstration on display and Soes, and marketplace
20 April 2020	Workshop, and min demonstration on Suiseki
18 May 2020	NO MEETING (CONVENTION)
15 June 2020	Demonstration Pines and Junipers and marketplace
20 July 2020	Workshop, and mini demonstration on Root over Rock
17 August 2020	Workshop, and demonstration on Landscapes by Khan Linh and marketplace
21 September 2020	Workshop, and mini demonstration on Rafts and wiring.
19 October 2020	Workshop, and mini demonstration on Pot making, and marketplace
16 November 2020	Workshop, and demonstration by Ray and Clinton Nesci
14 December 2020	AGM and Christmas Party.
Club Events	
15-18 th May 2020 'Golden Celebration' 33 rd AABC National Convention	Illawarra Bonsai Society in partnership with AABC presents the 33 rd AABC National Convention 'A Golden Celebration' at the Bankstown Sports Club Greenfield Parade Bankstown Union Club
21 st -23 rd August 2020	The 21 st annual Weekend Workshops at the Tops Conference Centre, Stanwell Tops

Other Events*	
29 th -1 st March 2020	Australian plants as Bonsai Symposium and Exhibition, Canberra
8 th March 2020	Ausbonsai Market Day 10am-1pm Killeen St. Auburn.
23 rd -29 th March 2020	Bonsai week- NBPCA Canberra.
27 th -29 th March 2020	Bonsai by the Beach Bonny Hills Port Maquarie.
7 th -8 th September 2020	Central Coast Bonsai Club Annual Show
17 th -18 th October 2020	Wauchope Bonsai Show LUSC Laurieton

NEXT MEETING

On the 17th February, 2020 at 7.30pm we will have Paul Dipuglia from Neutrog giving us a power-point presentation (duration approx.. 45-60 mins) on fertilizers and garden care. All attendees at the talk will receive **FREE** samples of their latest products. You will also have the opportunity to take home your **pre-ordered** copy of their book called 'From the Ground Up' written specifically for NSW by the Ross Family. This book normally sells for \$49.95 but for this talk, we have been given the special price of \$35. If you would like to pre-order this book please let me know ASAP before the club meeting night so Paul can bring enough copies on the night. My email is brendap7@bigpond.com or MOB: 0412 384 834. There will be **NO** workshop on this night – but if you would like an opinion on a problem tree, bring it along for guidance on what to do.

LIBRARY BOOKS

Any books that were not returned by the close of business for 2019, please do so by the February meeting.

TREE DISPLAY

Keep up your great efforts of bringing in some lovely trees for our display on the club nights. Of course try to bring in the best of the best to give me the opportunity to select trees for our convention in May. Quite a few lovely trees have already been selected but I need to see more for variation in the display.

BONSAI WEEK IN CANBERRA 23rd MARCH – 29th MARCH

There will be two international demonstrators at the Arboretum for Bonsai Week – Marija Hajdic and Nik Rozman from Europe, who will be doing demonstrations and workshops. Go the website www.nationalarboretum.act.gov for all the details and prices if you intend to head to Canberra during these dates.

AUSBONSAI SALE

I'm pleased to announce the details for the 7th annual AusBonsai Market.

For sale on the day will be old bonsai collections including some very high quality trees at realistic prices, Japanese Pots and accessories, handmade pots, stands, pre-bonsai, starter stock, suiseki and MORE.

Date: Sunday 8th March 2020

Time: 10:00am to 1:00pm (no buyers will be permitted into the sales area prior to 10am)

Where: Auburn Community Picnic Area: Killeen Street, Auburn (400 mtrs from Auburn Japanese Garden) [Google Map Link](#)
AusBonsai Market Location.jpeg

Parking for over 70 vehicles is available immediately adjacent to the undercover venue.

Bathroom facilities are available for all.

There will again be a mobile coffee van selling hot and cold beverages.

In 2019 the 27 stall holders had over 1000 bonsai on sale, more than 500 pots and close to 600 other bonsai related items.

Spaces are limited so if you would like to register your interest to have a stall please contact steven@ausbonsai.com.au for details, costs and to secure your place.

Sellers will be able to drive right up to the sale area for easy unloading etc and snacks, lunch and refreshments will be provided for sellers on the day.

Regards, from Steven Hantos

During the holidays I was doing my very belated 'Spring Cleaning' of cupboards and drawers of bonsai 'stuff' and I came across this very old article that was given to me many years ago. Unfortunately, there is no name on it so I cannot give this person the notoriety it deserves and for the life of me I cannot remember who gave it to me – by the way, it was not a bonsai person but a garden club person, but this was many years ago. A lot of this information in this article is for ground-grown azaleas, but I thought that the history behind these plants is so interesting. Hope you enjoy the read?

AZALEAS

Unfortunately, too few people realise how our plants, shrubs and trees are continuously engaged in fighting the battle for air, water and visual pollution.

We all enjoy the shade and shelter of our trees and the cooler air beneath which is caused by the transpiration of the leaves - just as we perspire they transpire. Their foliage screens dust and pollutants from the atmosphere and then gives back purified air enriched in nitrogen that is so essential to our well-being AND the tree. Properly landscaped, they will reduce noise and leaves and stems are even able to change the direction of sound waves thus reducing the intensity of noise.

For me, the tree symbolizes our existence on earth. When we are born it's timber is used to make cots and to make coffins when we die and ALL GARDENERS should give precedence to tree planting before considering the purchase and planting of any other plant, remembering the 'tree' will cover all kinds of ugliness that man has created and will contribute so much to the improvement of our environment giving to all of us better health and happiness. Trees are needed, not only to complement azaleas, but to give height for a skyline and the dappled shade necessary for the continued health of the azaleas.

The story of the azalea goes back to about 400BC to Ancient Greece and Babylon, and the race had its beginnings in Th'Lonok Valley in the Sikkim Himalayas which is the eastern region of the Himalayas. When the great spill-out of seed occurred, the trade winds carried the seed on every chance current of air to Europe, Asia, Indonesia, establishing their outpost in Northern Australia, thence east and north through China across the then existing land bridge to America down along the Rockies to Florida and to south-east Texas. Fossils 50,000,000 years old which were found in America are the same type as those growing in China today.

From the Giant Magnolia evolved the camellia and the rhododendron and the family belongs to one of perhaps two dozen great families of plants "the Ericacea" included in which are such plants of Pieris, Calluna, Gaultheria, Kalmias, Blueberries and Cranberries, and even today the genus is still evolving. All of these plants need an acid soil.

Azaleas are now included in the genus Rhododendron but when the azalea was described as a separate genus, evergreen azaleas were unknown – later when they were "found" there was not enough significance to justify retaining a separate genus so today they are classified within the genus Rhododendron.

At times you may have wondered why azaleas and rhododendron leaves vary so much in size – nature has provided a rule, that is, that the higher the altitude and the greater the exposure, the leaf is very small so that at 15,000 to 16,000 feet the species grow like heather and are covered with snow to protect them against the cold searing winds.

As the altitude drops, one finds the larger leaved species in the deep shelter of the rain forests in mountain valleys but still about 10,000 feet and although most of the plants we grow in our gardens today are cultivars, that is cultivated by man from the species – the rule of nature still applies. The word 'variety' only applies when a variation occurs within a species.

One of the reasons why in the wild the genus Rhododendron is a predominate plant of mountain areas, is that mountains attract RAIN and the average annual temperature decreases by 10 degrees for every 300 feet rise in altitude.

Azaleas and rhododendrons contain one of the most deadly poisons. About 1768 it was published by a German Professor of Chemistry that an infusion of rhododendron leaves would cure rheumatism and arthritis and for nearly a century those victims of these complaints suffered appallingly. No one knows how many tens of thousands of arthritis sufferers were subjected to the poisonous rhododendron 'tea' which extended for 115 years. Finally and paradoxically, it can be used for high blood pressure but one

should beware of honey from hives near any large plantings. **Ed: NOTE – DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES USE THIS REMEDY FOR THESE AILMENTS.**

We owe much to a Bishop Compton and to the missionary John Bannister who in the 17th century collected seeds sending them back to Britain but for almost 200 years it was believed azaleas could only be grown in glass houses.

About 1877 an azalea called **Balsaeminaflora** – a tiny species crept out into English gardens and today it can be found growing happily in some of our gardens and it is exquisitely beautiful.

In Australia, a Mr. Oliver Streeton was one of the first Australians to successfully propagate rhododendrons from cuttings.

In Australia the most popular azaleas growing in our gardens are the Mollis the tall growing singles, the Belgium Indian hybrids (known as the doubles) and the Kurumes. They all come as single, semi-double, hose-in-hose and variation forms of frilled, ruffled and waved.

A climate not too cold and free from frost and excessively hot sunlight, is the basic requirement of the double hybrids. These are the azaleas common to the coastal areas of N.S.W. but where heavy frosts occur, considerable damage could occur, so that brings me to the Kurume azalea, the one most preferred for growing in our gardens.



This is a photo of a friend's beautiful Azalea Balsaeminaflora which is mentioned in this article – it is quite rare and a bit hard to find. The flowers are absolutely exquisite.
