

Newsletter

October 2022

SABA Update:

The EXCO has been busy since our last AGM held in Grabouw at the Houwhoek Hotel and Conference Centre.

As communicated earlier, this event was sponsored by WESGRO and the NATIONAL CONVENTION BUREAU in preparation for the bid that we decided SABA, in conjunction with ABA to host WBC10 in Cape Town, South Africa.

To facilitate the bidding process, SABA had to undergo some structural changes which included:

- Register as a NON-PROFIT Company
- Change in Year End to February is June
- Get Tax exemption from SARS
- Update the constitution to facilitate the above changes and change the Memorandum of Incorporation of the Company to reflect the constitution

We will communicate with the clubs shortly regarding the proposed changes in the constitution so feedback on the changes and any other suggestions can be obtained and incorporated into the updated constitution which we will then have approved by Clubs/ Board or Representatives.

As a result of Constitutional changes, we are reviewing and aligning other SABA documents and policies to this.

The Website has been updated with a new fresh look and is updated on a regular basis with Bonsai related events throughout South Africa.

In conjunction with the updated website, the monthly Photo Competition has been reintroduced and, although participation to date has been slow, we believe that it will gain

momentum as the results of the competition are published on social media. We encourage you all to pick up a camera and photograph your prized trees.

A regular newsletter has also been introduced with feedback from the Regions and Clubs on their bonsai activities and also a quarterly themed and weightier newsletter relating to the bonsai landscape in South Africa. This has been a resounding success with lots of positive feedback from the members.

The WBFF bid process took place on 26 September 2022, where Jonathan Cane, the current President of ABA and secretary of the WBFF, presented the ABA/SABA bid to host the convention in either 2025 or 2026. Three regions, China, Malaysia, and Africa submitted bids and the current WBFF committee evaluated and voted on each of the bids.

Unfortunately for us, Malaysia won the bid with a majority vote so Africa/South Africa will have to wait for another day! We did however gain valuable experience in the preparation and presentation of the bid which should stand us in good stead in future! The main reasons for us not making headway with the bid were:

- At the time only 4 South Africans were registered to attend WBC9 which will be hosted virtually from Friday 8 October 2022
- Proposed financial benefit to WBFF out of the Convention.

The Department of Tourism was prepared to sponsor the event to a max of R1m which equated to approx. \$55k US. China was prepared to offer the WBFF \$50k US as a token of appreciation and had ample sponsorships for the event. Malaysia's proposed profit share was also better than our proposed profit share.

We do however believe that the structural changes that took place within SABA, will make it easier in future to elicit funding from entities like the LOTTO and other Government Organisations, which contribute to further the cause of NON-PROFIT Companies, if they are properly registered.

With spring well on its way and summer approaching fast, it is the time of the year that most of us are snowed under in all the bonsai maintenance and styling of our precious trees and we hope that all your endeavours are successful in elevating the quality of our trees and thereby South African Bonsai to the next level!

Bonsai greetings,

Tola Smit

SABA EXCO President

SABA subscriptions reminder

Subs were due in July 2022 for the year running from July 2022 to June 2023.

Subs are as follows: Club member R40, Individual member R100 and Organisations R200.

Payments are to be made to the Standard Bank account (details below) and please avoid making cash deposits as the fees are exorbitant.

South African Bonsai Association NPC

Standard Bank

Account Number: 140313478
Account: PlusPlan Business

Branch: Brandwag Branch Code: 055534

ANNOUNCEMENT:

The SABA website is live, and we would like to use it to centralize communication between the affiliated clubs and SABA.

A new process is to be followed for renewing of yearly membership to SABA.

We are asking all affiliated clubs to complete the membership form on the SABA website, to make sure the correct contact email address is on file and that the current number of members is updated so that clubs do not get billed for the incorrect number of members. Please make payment based on the number of members your club has.

PHOTO COMPETITION: AUGUST & SEPTEMBER

Entries are still low, but we had high quality trees. See all the entrants on the website. You have to register first as it is a SABA members only competition. You can also vote for your favourite trees.

Entering a tree is easy; just go to the SABA website (<u>www.saba.org.za</u>). Register (or login) then click on competitions. Enter the monthly competition and upload your photograph first then complete the form.

Congratulations to our winners. We look forward to many more entries going forward.

Enter now!

EXOTIC



Original artist: Gail Theron

Botanical Name of tree: Celtis sinensis

Common Name of tree: Chinese

Hackberry

Species: Exotic

Height of tree: 47cm

Origin of Bonsai pot: Imported - Japan

Photographer: Debbie Harris



Original artist: Gail Theron

Botanical Name of tree: Celtis

sinensis

Common Name of tree: Chinese

Hackberry

Species: Exotic

Height of tree: 45cm

Origin of Bonsai pot: Imported - China

Photographer: Debbie Harris

INDIGENOUS



Original artist: Jonathan Cain **Botanical Name of tree:** Olea E sub

africana

Common Name of tree: Wild Olive

Species: Indigenous **Height of tree:** 50cm

Origin of Bonsai pot: Imported -

China

Photographer: Jonathan Cain

Brief history of planting: This was a

stump in 2006.



Original artist: Scott Bredin **Botanical Name of tree:** Ficus

natalensis

Common Name of tree: Natal fig

Species: Indigenous **Height of tree:** 55cm

Origin of Bonsai pot: Imported - China

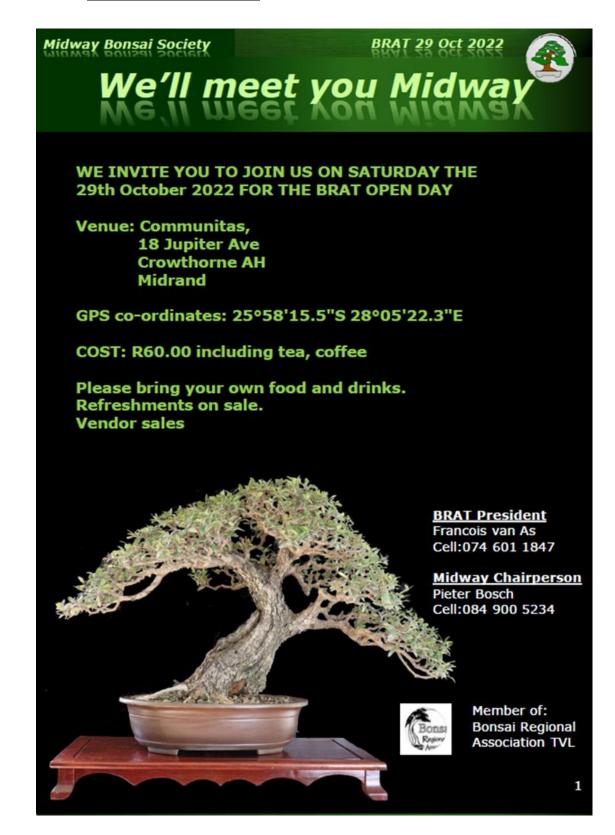
Photographer: Scott Bredin

Brief history of planting: This tree was collected from a local graveyard around

2005 and first potted in 2008

REGIONAL NEWS:

• BRAT: Reported by Org Exley





We'll meet you Midway

PROGRAM OF THE DAY: We'll meet you Midway

08:30 - 09h00 Registration

09:00 - 09:30 Welcome: Pieter Bosch - MBS Chairperson Welcome: Francois van As- BRAT President

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09:30 - 10:30 Hannes Fritz - Swamp Surprise

10:30 - 11:00 Tea and Coffee. Looking at trees

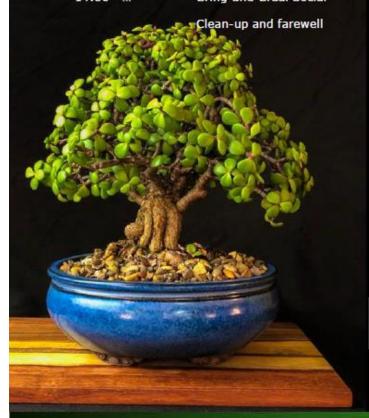
11:00 - 12:00 Arnold de Beer Photography

12:10 - 12:30 Quick Lunch Break

12:30 - 14:30 Merry-go-round Team event

14:30 - 14:50 Acknowledgements and farewells

14:50 - ... Bring-and-Braai Social



BRAT President

Francois van As Cell:074 601 1847

Midway Chairperson

Pieter Bosch Cell:084 900 5234



Member of: Bonsai Regional Association TVL

TIME TO SAY GOODBYE And to think about what I did - Pieter Loubser

I started off with bonsai in a very enthusiastic way. I went for my first dig in 1982 on my own and the Olive I dug out in a valley in Sandhills, near De Doorns, near Worcester in the Boland, as shown below, was planted in sand in a huge container and most of it survived. It was originally one tree but when the trunk base was sawn off it was divided into two single trunks and one double trunk. One tree died.



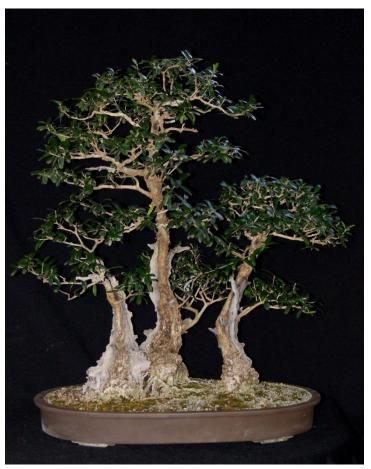
Many years later the single tree looked as follows.



And the double trunk was doing well.



And then, as some Oleas do, both started dying off in sections. Strips of trunks stayed alive, but as show-trees, the game was over. Derry advised that I plant them as a group, which I did as seen below, some years later.



The photograph above was taken about in 2018 and I have since been working on it to increase the density and develop a more coherent outline (silhouette). There is an area towards the back that needs to be filled in and I have smaller branches starting to do that. All of this shows how long

it can take to create an acceptable bonsai even if our levels of judging at whichever stage differ and by this I mean that we all vary in opinion as to when a tree should be seen as a bonsai.

The main trunk is about 100cm tall. It is growing in a Japanese container from a reknown Japanese pottery.

The trees themselves must be well over one hundred years old seeing that I stole them from nature some 40 years ago and have worked on them with setbacks and recoveries over the years. It is doing very well at the moment, but needs re-potting. I cannot pick it up to move it around and at this point in time I came to realise that my youth exuberance needed trimming.

It is time to say goodbye and it needs to be passed on to somebody else who can look after it with loving hands.

And I have some other larger trees that I also have to part with, as well as the emotions and memories.

I have to stop listening to my emotions. And it is rather difficult and something I need to sort out privately. How do you say goodbye to something like this? Had I left it in the valley in 1982, it would probably still have been growing and contributing to the survival of nature in its own way for hundreds of years to come. I cannot allow my youtful adventure to amount to nothing else than destroying a living creature. This tree needs to be nurtured for as long as possible or taken back to nature as silly as this sounds. And I need to rethink my attitude towards yamadori and the pleasure I gain from bonsai as an art.

Hopefully I can find somebody that can care for this beauty, and even better than I did.

CENTRAL: Reported by Heinrich Köhne

No information was received from this region

• CRAB: Reported by Dawn Collier

- Oyama's Winter Bash 2022 - On a cold, wet weekend in August.

I have been going to the Oyama Winter Bash in Cape Town for a number of years now, and I never stop being amazed by how they just get better and better each year. I often think one day is enough, but no, you definitely need two full days, as this club packs it full of surprises, new trees and different topics each time.

This year, the theme was Deciduous trees, but particularly show casing our Indigenous and Heritage trees in South Africa.

The first guest speaker needs no introduction to Bonsai in this country. He hails from a small-town North, called Heidelberg, which many of us have never been too. Hannes Fritz, a humble quietly spoken artist who has an absolute love for deciduous trees, especially the Celtis species. This was his first tree which he started as a teenager many years ago. The energy that he absorbs from his winter trees is just so inspiring, and he never seems to get disheartened by the very harsh growing conditions in his region. He grows them from young trees often collected on his farm and loves to create sharis and hollowed out trunks of which Dan Robertson would be proud. Hannes shared his collection with us, via a power point presentation, giving us detailed advice on what has worked for him over the years. He does very little wiring and mainly relies on the clip and grow method. Being on a farm he loves the outdoors and loves trying out new species and experiments as much as he can.











One of the next presentations I enjoyed was Carl Morrow's, who also needs no introduction at all. His demonstration was on 2 historical vines that are of agricultural heritage significance. The vines are from an old vineyard in the Worcester area of Cape Town, that was planted in 1902 and 1933. He wants to preserve their integrity as much as possible as he knows there will be some issues with the design on how to incorporate this old material into a Bonsai. His approach always fascinates me, especially as he is also using new material that is at our fingertips to keep us inspired.





In between the presentations we had a variety of different demonstrations. From the assembling of an Elm forest, to "How to make your own pots with cement", to Flowering deciduous trees, the Program was jam packed! And not to mention the trees on display, everyone brought along at least one or 2 which were of a very high standard. It was hard for Hannes to choose the winning trees.













The last speaker for the event was Brett Simon, who introduced most of us to a fascinating rather new species called Premna mooiensis. These shrubs/small trees are found in the Natal Midlands and even further north. Brett has been going up every year since 2017, either late winter or early spring and together with Gary Howes and some of his Bonsai buddies, they dig up as many as they can. There is a possibility that these trees may no longer exist in a couple of years ,as the local people chop them down for fire wood and the goats eat them literally to the ground. These are trees that not only can survive this, but also very extreme weather conditions too.





They are deciduous, but some don't always loose their leaves over winter. They are fast growers and can thicken up quickly in a growing season, actually, they can have 3 growth periods in a season! Brett advises to only wire in the 2nd year, keeping them in a quick, fast draining mixture of 3 parts Leca/3 parts pumice/1-part akadama. They do not like to be kept wet, in humid conditions, yet with the wet rainy winters in the Cape, they seem to be surviving and growing well.

This collected species has everything that we love in a Bonsai, from deadwood, old bark, hollows, cracks and it even flowers in early spring - small white/beige coloured flowers that turn into berries.

This material will definitely stand proud side by side to our other unique indigenous material.

As always, one says good bye to not only meeting new and old friends, but with new ideas, and aspirations to take my trees to the next level.

I can't wait for next year.....

- News from Boland Bonsai club reported by Prof Winfried Ludemann

Boland Bonsai Kai is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. To mark this special event the club will hold its annual show in the Rupert Art Museum in Stellenbosch over the weekend 26 and 27 November. The bonsai trees will be displayed against the backdrop of the Pierneef paintings displayed in the museum. This should make for an extraordinary interaction between two complimentary art forms, quite possibly never attempted before in South Africa. Needless to say that the artist Pierneef holds special significance for bonsai growers in our country, so this show is a "must see" for all CRAB members.

As a run-up to this show Boland Bonsai Kai will also take part in the Stellenbosch Garden Week. Our participation will entail a week-long mini exhibition and a workshop open to the public. The event will take place at the Markötter Stadium.

Flowering Bonsai - Ken Weinman

Understanding your tree Flowering tree physiology

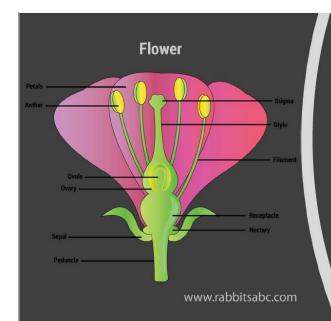
- · What are flowers
- How are they formed and what are the triggers
- Where do they occur
- When do they occur



WHAT are flowers?

- ➤ REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS OF THE PLANT
- MODIFIED STEMS AND LEAVES- FORMS THE PEDUNCLE (STEM), THE PETALS AND SEPALS, STAMENS (MALE) AND PISTIL (FEMALE)
- ➤ THEIR SOLE FUNCTION IS REPRODUCTION OF THE SPECIES..
- FLOWERS (AND FRUIT) DO NOT REDUCE IN SIZE AS WOULD LEAVES....
 THE TREE WILL NEVER COMPROMISE REPRODUCTION
- Choose small flowered varieties as far as nossible
- > For larger flowered species grow larger treeskeep scale and proportion in check





HOW ARE THEY FORMED

- Flowers are MODIFIED STEMS
- Growth hormones (Gibberellins) are responsible for the modification and formation of the bud.
- Formation is often triggered by either light and/or temperature- called PHOTOPERIODISM



WHERE DO THEY FORM

- Since flowers are modified stems they will develop at the same points as would normal stems viz. in the leaf AXILS.
- The axil is the growth point between a leaf and its stem.
- Flowers of certain species will only occur terminally- that is at the tip of a new (current years growth) stem.
- Knowing which buds will form normal stems and which form flowering stems is useful when refining a flowering bonsai

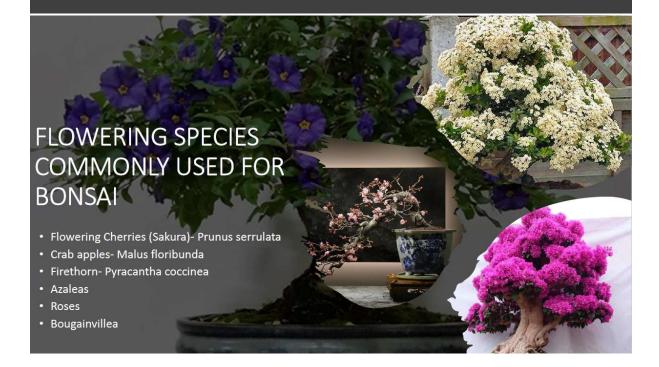
• WHEN DO THEY FORM

- Gibberellins (Growth hormones) are triggered by changes in light and Temperature (Photoperiodism)
- Most deciduous stone fruit (apples and plums etc) form flowering buds during the summer growing period.
- It takes 8 weeks of colder temperatures (and in some cases shorter days) to trigger the opening of the flower.
- This is how certain pot plants can be forced to flower at times that they wouldn't normally.

How pruning can ruin your flowering...

Incorrect timing and judicious pruning can limit bud formation...







Malus floríbunda -Crab Apples

Flowers are born in two locations viz.

1) Terminally (at the tips) of 1 year old stems and 2) on spurs on older stems

Winter pruning (before budding) will reduce any terminal flower formation. On young trees you may not get any flowering at all.

In older trees, spurs on 2-year-old and older stems will give you good flowering- be sure not to remove these to maximize impact.



Japanese Flowering Cherries (Sakura)-Prunus serrulata

Cherry trees are very closely related to all the stone fruit (Plums, Apricots, Almonds etc.- even Roses.

In fact, they are all part of the Rosaceae family

Most of the deciduous fruit bearing trees in this family all bear fruit and flowers in the same way.

Flowers are ONLY born on 2-year-old stems and older by forming spurs

New , 1 year old growth will only produce leaves

- Once your tree's framework is defined you need to start pruning with this in mind- any heavy pruning will encourage strong vegetative growth- not flowers!
- Prune BEFORE flowering, In winter, to develop a finer ramification- Good for young trees but don't expect too many flowers.
- Prune AFTER flowering, early summer, to allow a season's worth of growth and development of spurs on older growth- Better for older and more established trees
- In some species the flowers are produced in a Leaf-Flower-Leaf bud combination. If you are unsure, then look for the "fattest" buds as they tend to be flower producing - KNOW YOUR TREE!





Wisteria sinensis

Proper pruning can help you manage a wisteria and produce a truly spectacular flower show.

At a minimum, pruning should be done twice a year:

once around mid-summer (a few months after flowering) and again in late winter/early spring (before the plant leaf's out).

Flower spurs develop on *tertiary* branches

- Tertiary laterals: side shoots that grow from the laterals. Some of these develop into flowering spurs (short side shoots where flower buds typically develop).
- Understanding the different bud shapes is also important: flowering buds are rounded and more swollen, whereas leaf buds are narrower and pointed. In this picture the larger buds are flower buds, and the small, pointy buds are leaf buds.



Azaleas

Azaleas are temperature reliant and NOT day length dependant in order to bloom

Buds are formed terminally during the warm growing season if they receive enough water.

Blooming is triggered by 4-8 weeks of temperatures below 10° C. If you can artificially achieve this you will have all the blooms occurring at the same time in spring.

In warmer climates blooming happens sporadically throughout the year

Continual judicious pruning will remove the Terminal buds where flowers form

Prune immediately AFTER flowering to encourage ramification and stems where buds can form





- Bonsai: The Art of Unfinished Symphonies by Winfried Lüdemann

Ken Wainman 2022

flowering. It stands to reason that good drainage is

Avoid the use of Peat moss in the soil medium

growth... Prune AFTER flowering.

Flowers are borne in cluster terminally on current years'

(This article is based on a presentation I gave at the 4th African Bonsai Convention, October 2015 in Stellenbosch.)

In the course of our activities as bonsai growers we usually regard the growing of trees as a horticultural activity. Quite rightly so. Our immediate concern is to keep our trees alive and healthy, we discuss amongst ourselves or read up on

questions of potting mix, fertilising, watering, replanting, branch and root pruning, the technique of wiring and pest control and try to improve our skill and knowledge of these aspects of bonsai growing. And then, of course, there is the constant question of styling. But do we really understand that styling a bonsai tree is more than pruning a fruit tree or a rose bush, more than laying out a garden or mowing a lawn in order to achieve optimal growing conditions for what it is that we expect from these horticultural assets? Are we aware that, in the final instance, bonsai is an art form? What kind of an art form? Allow me to unpack the three words in the above title: art, symphony and unfinished to answer this question.

There is probably general agreement that if bonsai is an art form it belongs to the visual arts, and that it is then most closely related to the art of sculpture. After all, it exploits and works with similar elements as the other visual arts do: shape, colour, texture, perspective, proportion and the three dimensions height, width and depth, all of these informed by the model of nature. But does that alone make it a form of art?

It is a characteristic of being human that we have the need to surround ourselves with works of art. We do this in order to compensate for what may be lacking in our daily struggle for existence: we search for beauty, harmony, value, order, profoundness, fullness, serenity and, perhaps, even an awareness of the transcendent; we may also contemplate adversity, pain and suffering, so as to make our lives more meaningful. We have the need to pause from our hectic daily activities in order to contemplate and experience these qualities. This is what bonsai, together with the other art forms, can contribute to our lives if we practice it in the appropriate way. In the ideal scenario a bonsai artist enters into a relationship with his/her trees, speaks to them and listens to what they have to say. In that way bonsai trees are able to contribute to the meaning of life of the person perceptive of the language they speak.

There are two elements in bonsai, however, that make it different from the other visual arts. The one is the fact that bonsai is created from living material, not from inanimate stone, metal, wood, paper, cloth or paint. It is material that demands extreme respect on the part of the artist. Consequently, it makes the artist mindful not to simply impose his/her will onto the material but to interact and engage with it. For that reason, also, the bonsai grower works with material that is subject to change and transformation over time. The element of time, then, links bonsai to the art of music, more specifically to the symphony. The

symphony is the highest form of pure or absolute music, and I would like to think that bonsai is like this. Like other music, a symphony does not reveal its full meaning all at once, not in one glance, but only in time. It unfolds its melodies, rhythms and harmonies, its dynamics and surprises, its tension and resolution only over time, from one moment to the next. It has the ability to take its listener on a metaphoric journey, the destination of which is not necessarily known at the outset. Bonsai also does that. A beautiful tree can only be appreciated fully if the viewer looks at it from different angles, walks around it from the front to one side, then to the other side and even to the back. It takes time to accomplish this. But the element of time is also a factor in the seasonal transformation which a tree undergoes. This means that a tree never looks the same throughout the year – like a painting in a museum does –, its appearance changes depending on the prevailing season. A tree in full summer foliage is quite different from a tree in glowing autumn colours or in the stark bareness of winter. Perhaps this can be compared to the various movements of a symphony with their contrasting moods: quick, slow, light-hearted or serious. Time also affects a tree in a third respect, namely age. Age is marked by the adversities a tree will have overcome during the course of its life, but also by the maturity it will have attained. Therefore, at their best, symphonies and bonsai trees are about life in all its precariousness and fullness.

A most important difference between the art of bonsai and all other art forms, however, is that a bonsai tree is never complete, it always remains unfinished. In other art forms the artist, at a certain point, applies her last brush stroke of paint to the painting, the sculptor packs his chisel away for the last time and the composer writes the last note, takes leave of his work and hands it over to the performer and the audience. The well-known exception to this norm is the Unfinished Symphony by Franz Schubert (1797–1828), a work which has attained its fame despite its incompleteness. To this day nobody really knows why Schubert did not finish this monumental work. The perceptive listener will always wonder how the parts of the symphony that were left uncompleted would have sounded, but accepts that this unfinished work reflects life in all its incompletenes. A bonsai tree has only reached completeness when it no longer grows, has reached the end of its journey and dies. In this sense the art of bonsai reflects the passage of human life more closely than any other art form can do. And that is why bonsai, as the art of unfinished symphonies, holds so much fascination for me.

• EASTERN:

No information was received from this region

• KZN: Reported by Dave Mays



- Durban Bonsai Society Newsletter

We are pleased to see so many of the established members of the club returning after the COVID pandemic putting a dampener on the last few years. This has got the artistic juices flowing again and members bringing the trees to work on and looking for alternative ideas. Many a good plan gets hatched in this manner.

The club meets at 0830 on the 2nd Sunday of the month at the Lions club in Durban North just behind the hyper by the sea. Visitors are most welcome.

The committee has instituted a monthly mug competition in 2 categories. Advanced members, with more than ten years' experience and young emerging talent, who have less than 10 years of practicing this creative artform.

This affords members to display their tree of the month. Although this has only recently been instigated the members have bought into the concept and has been well supported. Judges are randomly drawn and include both experienced and newer members.

The winners for August were:

Advanced: Scott Bredin

Emerging talent: David Wu



The winners for September were:

Advanced: Scott Bredin

Emerging talent: Gervais Jankey





Rumors that Scott has had a private chat to the judges are unfounded.

At the September meeting Shaun Murphy, gave a wonderful talk and demonstration of root over rock. Many thanks Shaun.





The club is tirelessly working towards our 2^{nd} post covid annual show which will take place over the weekend of 12-13 November 2022. If any bonsai nuts are in Durban over that weekend, we would love to see you. We have included a flyer on the show at the bottom of the newsletter for your perusal.

Bonsai Classified

If you are a business affiliated to SABA and would like to advertise in the SABA Newsletter, please send an 8cm wide by 5 cm long size advert in word document format, or a jpg. Image to wiky-@hotmail.com by the second Saturday of each month. Advertising in this newsletter is for registered vendors with SABA.







Stone Lantern Bonsai Nursery, 32 Owl Street, Joostenberg Vlakte 0833750446

stonelantern@hotmail.com

- We stock trees, pots, tools, wire, fertilizer, bonsai mixture
- Courses, workshops and one on one classes
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- Boarding facilities for trees
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HOME OF BLAAUWBERG BONSAI KAI

Meetings here on the last Saturday of the month from 1 to 4 pm

