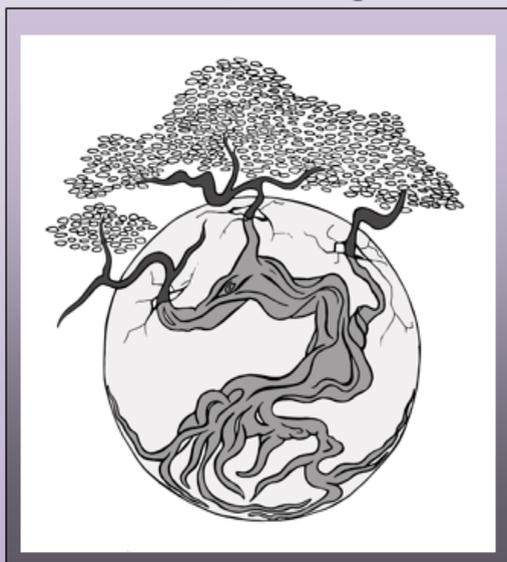


32ND AABC National Bonsai Convention

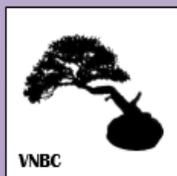
17-20 May 2019

Mantra Bell City, Melbourne

Australian Natives Breaking Through The Bonsai Ceiling



AABC MELBOURNE 2019



Hosted by Victorian Native Bonsai Club Inc

In partnership with

Association of Australian Bonsai Clubs Ltd





Australian Natives Breaking Through The Bonsai Ceiling

Have you ever wondered how the unique flora of Australia can be adapted to the ancient Japanese art of Bonsai? Come and learn how this is done and see some of the best native bonsai in Australia on display. Join the Victorian Native Bonsai Club Inc when it hosts the **32nd Australian National Bonsai Convention**. The theme of the Convention is **Australian Natives Breaking Through The Bonsai Ceiling** and that is exactly what will be emphasised during the Convention.



The Convention will be held in Melbourne in May 2019, a time when native plants will have had a whole Spring, Summer and Autumn growing season allowing for styling and grooming to be undertaken for nearly nine months, so the trees will be at their absolute peak.

The Convention will be held at **Mantra Bell City** from **17-20 May 2019**. The Convention includes an Exhibition, a Trade Sales Area, a Friday evening Welcome Reception, a Saturday night Convention Dinner, and Friday and Monday Workshops. All these will be held at the same venue. The **Exhibition** will feature a slightly different take on the traditional style exhibition to emphasise the unique Australian bonsai on display. Whilst all the trees on display will be Australian natives they will still be among the best bonsai Australia has to offer notwithstanding the fact they are native plants. The Exhibition will also be open to the public over the weekend.

There are two tours on Friday. One will take delegates to **Marg Fenn's Hachinoki Pottery** and then on to the **Heide Museum of Modern Art**. The second will go to the **Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne**.

We have been very fortunate to secure **Ryan Neil** as our headline demonstrator. Ryan is well known to many Australians having made a number of visits to Australia in the past. He has trained under the great Japanese bonsai master Masahiko Kimura. The knowledge of bonsai aesthetics and horticulture he received in Japan, his formal training in Horticulture in the United States, and his great desire to see native species from all parts of the world used in bonsai make him uniquely qualified to offer, and impart, fantastic information during the Convention. Ryan has travelled throughout the world and has a wonderful ability to work quickly through a demonstration tree all the while explaining what he is doing and telling the audience of his experiences. Along with conducting demonstrations over the weekend Ryan will be conducting two, full day closed **Master Class workshops** on Friday and Monday. He will also hold a Critique session of some of the trees from the Exhibition.

Over the weekend we will have some great local talent making presentations. Each will approach and discuss the styling of native bonsai from a different perspective.



Hugh Grant, has a love of working with collected material. His background in Fine Arts and his experience gained whilst training with Ryan Neil in the United States has led him to produce some stunning bonsai.

Roger Hnatiuk, is unsurpassed in the bonsai world with his knowledge of Australian natives. Roger very much likes to retain a look of trees in the wild in his bonsai creations.

Quentin Valentine, is President of the Victorian Native Bonsai Club, a highly respected bonsai artist and bonsai grower in Victoria.

Victorian Native Bonsai Club

The Victorian Native Bonsai Club Inc. began from a discussion between Marcela Ferreira and Quentin Valentine. After failing to generate interest in one of the large Victorian clubs in having a sub-group of that Club that only dealt with native plants, rather than give up, they decided to start a new club.



A venue was booked in September 2013 to ascertain the amount of interest in such a club, brochures advertising the meeting were distributed. They then waited to see if anybody would turn up. An enthusiastic group of about 40 people attended. Many had travelled considerable distances to get there. Clearly there was enough interest to proceed. Seed funding was sought, and granted, from BFA Southern. Marcela and Quentin also contributed some of their own funds.

The first official meeting was in October 2013. A committee was elected and the Club was off and running. The Club's aim was to raise the level of awareness of the suitability of Australian natives as bonsai material and also to investigate the use of species that were not currently being tried. This was to be done in a welcoming and non-threatening environment.



From its humble beginnings the Club has come a long way in 5 years. It has approximately 150 members, a large proportion of whom are from regional areas of Victoria and also many from interstate. The Club meets in Coburg, very close to Bell City where the Convention will be held. Regular meetings attract approximately 40 members. Saturday workshop meetings which are held every 2 months are also very popular. In its short history the Club has held 5 exhibitions and hosted two Australian Native Plants as Bonsai Symposiums.

Club members have access to a database on the suitability of various species of native plants for bonsai. This database continues to grow as more information and knowledge comes in. Videos of our meetings are made available to all club members. These are particularly popular with our regional and interstate visitors.



The Club continues to take its message to not only the bonsai community, but also the wider community. It has been involved in giving talks at a number of Native Plant Societies as well as other Bonsai Clubs.



Ryan Neil



Ryan Neil is a bonsai professional, visual artist, and entrepreneur who is redefining the world's understanding of bonsai from a technical hobby to a fine art medium. His approach reflects the interdependent relationships between nature, culture, and the individual.

Born and raised in Western Colorado, Ryan Neil's character was carved by the harsh climate of the Rockies and by an unprecedented 6 year apprenticeship with world-renowned bonsai master, Masahiko Kimura.

In 2010, Ryan Neil returned from his apprenticeship in Japan to Portland, Oregon with a drive to elevate bonsai as a respected art form. To accomplish this, he founded Bonsai Mirai - an epicentre for bonsai - a place where people could come and see the highest quality work being produced on a daily basis. He sought to build a community of ceramicists, woodworkers, artists, and creatives working together to advance and explore this living art form.

What started as an ambition has expanded into an 'American Bonsai Movement,' focused particularly in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. Due to Ryan Neil's vision and efforts, a collective exploration has swept the Pacific Northwest, with individuals utilising the power of bonsai to reconnect to their native environments.

Ryan Neil's mission is to establish a new era in bonsai, where compositions reflect the vast array of landscapes and cultures that are formed in their midst. His numerous exhibitions have ignited controversy, expanded the public's understanding of bonsai, and inspired many to take up the art form.



Artistically, Ryan Neil plays with context to challenge the viewer to think about the tree, themselves, and the creation as a culmination of experiences and outside forces shaping every element of design. As his work evolves and the impact of the compositions expand, his ambitions and understanding of bonsai's power to reconnect people to the landscape only grows stronger and more fluent.

Entering his 7th year as a bonsai professional, Ryan Neil is just beginning to push the limit of bonsai design, tapping into the art form's ability to converse with viewers near and far. Through the inherently collaborative nature of Ryan Neil's work, he and his team are joining with craftsmen, designers, photographers, scientists, and creative visionaries across the world to rethink the environment for community-oriented, artistic engagement. With Ryan Neil's impact, the world is only just beginning to understand bonsai's full potential, as a vehicle for cultural, personal, and environmental transformation.

Victorian Inspiration...



Victorian Native Bonsai Representative

Hugh Grant

Hugh is a young contemporary practicing artist and bonsai designer. Hugh's work within bonsai is formed by both his fine art background and coastal rural upbringings close to Sydney on the central coast of NSW.



Hugh functions as a practicing designer through his business Hugh Grant Design, making bonsai, selling bonsai and collected material. He also has a close following of students, mentoring clients, and exhibiting work that evokes an exploration of the tree within contemporary modern life. Focusing on sound well constructed designs, he works to convey other ideas through his trees, straying from balance and peace and exploring more abstract yet naturally informed structures.



Roger Hnatiuk

Roger's interest in bonsai dates back over half a century ago, but his focus on Australian species dates from 43-44 years ago in Perth.



In 2001, he initiated the Australian Plants as Bonsai Study Group under the auspices of the Australian Native Plant Society to provide a place for sharing information on suitable species for bonsai and how to grow them. With bonsai colleagues, he started the first 'national' bonsai exhibition at the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG). In 2003, working with bonsai colleagues and friends, Roger led the establishment of the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia. One of Roger's greatest joys has been to work with such a wonderful group of people towards a common goal of great significance. One that could not be obtained by one or even a small group working on their own.

Over the past quarter century, Roger has made several presentations and demonstrations to bonsai clubs and conferences in Australia. He has championed the use of Australian species as bonsai, not because they are better than the 'exotics', but rather because they are so unexplored and yet have such great potential to contribute to bonsai both nationally and internationally. He was an early starter in the designing of pots that evoked one kind of sense-of-Australia suitable for Australian species. His work was included in "Bonsai Potters" (2007) by Daan Giphart and Levon Arzooyan. He has also promoted the goal of re-awakening the role and value of art in bonsai in Australia.

Quentin Valentine

Quentin Valentine is well known in Victoria as a skilled bonsai practitioner. His commitment to the art and sharing his knowledge and experience with others is widely acknowledged.



Quentin worked in horticulture for 30 years and took up bonsai in 1989 after borrowing a book from the library. He thought "I could do that easily" and so he did, helped by the numerous variety of plants he was already propagating in the backyard. One tree remains from that first batch of trees, a shohin Liquidamber!

Quentin joined a few clubs and went to Japan Seminar House as he sought advice and gradually developed his skills. He is prepared to tackle almost any plant material and has tried his hand at an increasing number of Australian species. He now has a number of significant Australian native bonsai as well as continuing his interest in Pines, and Penjing Collection of Australia in Canberra.

deciduous trees, and broadleaved evergreens. He has had trees on display at the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia in Canberra.

Quentin was one of those instrumental in setting up the Victorian Native Bonsai Club that commenced in 2013, and took on the presidency at that time, as well as imparting his knowledge at meetings and workshops.

Special Convention Events

Master Class Workshops

Ryan will hold two Master Class Workshops. One on Friday 17th May, and one on Monday 20th May.

The workshops will be run from 9.00am till 4.00pm on both Friday and Monday. The workshops will involve Ryan and eight Participants, and will not be open to Observers. Lunch will be supplied. It is anticipated that the workshops will be more suitable for enthusiasts who have a good level of experience, and who will be working on more advanced bonsai material.

This is a one off opportunity to spend a whole day with a world renowned bonsai professional with minimal distractions.

Please note: Master class Workshops are available only to Convention registrants.

Local Demonstrator Workshops

Hugh will run open workshops with the opportunity for observers to sit in on the sessions. These workshops are tailored to all levels of experience.

Please note: All workshop material to be Australian natives only. We may be able to assist in sourcing suitable material for you if required.

Friday Welcome Reception

The Friday night Welcome Reception is always a great opportunity to meet the demonstrators and catch up with bonsai friends. Drinks and light refreshments will be served in the Marquee area which will be followed by an early viewing of the exhibition for Welcome Reception registrants only.

Special Convention Events

Friday 17 May Tour 1 : Hachinoki Pottery Studio and Heide Museum of Modern Art

Delegates start with a tour of Marg Fenn's Hachinoki pottery studio, where she will explain and demonstrate the process behind her pot making.

Two course lunch at the RSL On Bell, Heidelberg Heights is provided.

From lunch, delegates will then take part in a 90 minute Premium guided tour of The Heide Museum and Gardens. The tour will focus on the Gardens and Heide History or Gardens and a specific exhibition.



Images courtesy of: Heide Museum of Modern Art
Photograph: John Gollings

Friday 17 May Tour 2: Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne

Delegates head to the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne, with a view to boarding a Garden Explorer Bus at 10.00 am for an hour tour. The tour journeys through the Australian Garden, hopping off at photo opportunity points with your guide as you discover the diversity, colour and beauty of Australian native plants.

You can enjoy a coffee or a light snack or lunch at the Boon Wurrung Café.

If you choose to cater for yourself the following options are available:

- There are wooden garden bench seats scattered all around the Australian Garden, as well as many metal chairs for your comfort.
- The Stringybark Picnic Area, located at the end of Stringybark Drive and a mere 50 metres from the car park, offers BBQ's and seating under the shade of trees.
- The Woodland Picnic Area, located just a 600 metre walk from the Visitor Centre, offers undercover BBQ's and seating as well as a large playground and grassy area.



Images courtesy of:
Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria

Vendor Sales Area



With the Convention focussing entirely on Australian natives this does not mean there will be a lack of quality plant material to purchase. Growers have been preparing ground and pot grown stock for a number of years so there will be a great range to choose from.

There will be quality pots for sale from local potters, whose work is now very much in demand, and also from overseas suppliers. There will also be plenty of stocks of wire, both copper and aluminium, plus tools, stands, and other bonsai related items.



The Vendor Area will be open to the general public for the whole of the weekend but Convention registrants will get the first access to the area from 8.00am Saturday morning.

Saturday Night Convention Dinner

The convention dinner is a great opportunity to meet, mingle and have a chat with Ryan as well as other bonsai enthusiasts from across Australia. The convention dinner is more than just a fantastic 3 course meal, including drinks, as it also includes:

- award presentations for best tree/s in the exhibition
- entertainment and auctioning of Saturday demo trees.

This will be another event that you will enjoy.



Mantra Bell City

Location

Bell City is just a short 20 minute drive from Melbourne's Tullamarine airport, with the CBD also within quick driving distance. There are also plenty of public transport options just minutes away.

Tram: Route 86 Bundoora RMIT will take you into the city from stop no. 45 Bell Street.

Train: The South Morang train stops at Bell train station, with a 10 minute walk to Mantra Bell City.

Car: Complimentary car parking is available onsite.



Accommodation

Mantra Bell City is situated within an impressive complex offering premium accommodation in Melbourne's vibrant inner north. Located just 20 minutes drive from the Melbourne CBD and airport, this contemporary hotel provides a central location for both corporate travellers visiting Melbourne for business, and for leisure guests wishing to explore Melbourne and its surrounds. Home to three great restaurants serving the finest cuisine and extensive resort style facilities including a large pool, fully equipped gymnasium and sauna, this is a great Melbourne accommodation option. Bell City boasts 844 rooms offering a diverse inventory of room types to suit every need.

Special Convention rates have been organised:

BreakFree Bell City

Sleep & Go Room Queen/Twin @ \$99 per room per night

A full buffet breakfast is an additional \$20.00 per person when pre-booked with your reservation.

Mantra Bell City

1 bedroom \$149 per room per night

2 bedroom \$209 per room per night

A full buffet breakfast is an additional \$20.00 per person when pre-booked with your reservation.

Please note: Rates are room only per night. All rates quoted are valid based on the dates and number of room nights quoted and are subject to availability at the time of booking.

**** Breakfast rates quoted are current at the time of printing and are subject to change.**



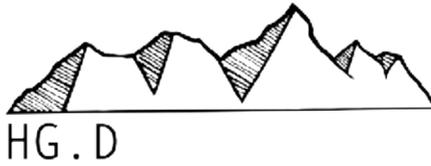
To book with Mantra Bell City accommodation and receive the special convention rates:

Phone – 03 9485 0380 or Email – bellcity.res@mantra.com.au

Mention Association of Bonsai Clubs 2019

to receive your convention rates.

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VICTORIAN NATIVE BONSAI CLUB
Focusing on Australian Native Plants as Bonsai

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