

26th National Bonsai Convention **Canberra**

The Australian Journey

17–20 May 2013



Hosted by Canberra Bonsai Society Inc
In partnership with The Association of Australian Bonsai Clubs Ltd

The Australian Journey

Over the last sixty years the Australian bonsai community has grown from enthusiasts working alone or in small, unconnected groups to a national community that is connected to the international bonsai community at many levels. During this time, the art of bonsai around the world has evolved to embrace new materials, new techniques and new paradigms. Within Australia there has been an increasing appreciation of our diverse landscapes and use of Australian materials, especially our native plants, in a way that better evokes the Australian landscape.

The 2013 convention programme reflects the traditions of miniature trees and landscapes that we have inherited from China and Japan and explores the evolution of the art of bonsai in the Australian context.

Ryan Neil, the keynote demonstrator, trained with Mr Masahiko Kimura whose creative and innovative approaches have inspired bonsai artists around the world. Mr Kimura believes that the heritage of traditional Japanese bonsai should continue to evolve and that bonsai artists around the world should use their own cultural heritage to create their own vision of bonsai art. Ryan Neil is an internationally acclaimed bonsai artist committed to using what he learnt as Mr Kimura's apprentice to influence and evolve the future of western bonsai.

Demonstrations and presentations by our four national demonstrators, Averil Stanley, Andrew Ward, Roger Hnatiuk and Leigh Taafe, will highlight the breadth and diversity of the art of bonsai in Australia at present, including the traditions which have shaped our practice and the current influences.

We also invite you to take a guided tour of the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia which will be operating in its exciting new location in the National Arboretum Canberra.

Join us in Canberra in 2013 for the 26th AABC Convention to celebrate *The Australian Journey* as we review its many points of interest, discuss past and present pioneers and think about the next leg of the journey as we all continue to shape the future of bonsai in Australia.



International Demonstrator

Ryan Neil

Growing up in the Rocky Mountains of western Colorado, Ryan was exposed to endless examples of nature's wrath and nature's beauty. With every hike he took into the mountains, Ryan's interest in plants and their resilience grew, increasing his curiosity and unknowingly establishing a foundation for his future. Fishing may have been Ryan's initial motivation for exploring his backyard, the Rockies, but after a fateful encounter with bonsai at the annual town fair and mentor-to-be Harold Sasaki, the subject of his hikes and the path of his life changed forever. By the time Ryan graduated from high school he had already made up his mind to pursue bonsai professionally and knew that an education in horticulture could only help his chances of someday apprenticing under the great master Mr Masahiko Kimura.

Ryan's motivation for pursuing his bonsai education in Japan was not only driven by his desire to become adept at bonsai, but also to gain the skills, knowledge, and information he had a hard time finding while studying in the United States. During his college education at California Polytechnic State University, Ryan spent most weekends travelling to Los Angeles or the Bay Area to seek out the answers to his questions. Some were answered, many were not, but each trip took him one step closer to getting where he wanted to be. On one such trip Ryan had the pleasure of working with Mr Ben Oki. Little did he know the significance of this meeting, but after subsequent journeys to see Mr Oki, Ryan was invited on a trip to Japan to see the Kokufu exhibition and to meet the man behind Ryan's inspiration, Mr Kimura.

The visit to Mr Kimura's nursery was short and sweet, but the impression it left on Ryan would be forever imprinted in his heart and mind. Despite his less than encouraging initial conversation with Mr Kimura, Ryan returned from Japan determined to obtain an apprenticeship and make his dream of studying under Mr Kimura a reality. Ryan's simple strategy, a handwritten letter each month, proved to be a powerful tool for earning a place in Mr Kimura's garden. Two years after writing his initial letter Ryan received his first and only response from Mr Kimura. The letter read, "Try if you wish but failure is imminent." And so, Ryan was off to Japan.

The story of Ryan's apprenticeship in Japan is seemingly never-ending when you consider the experiences he had over the course of six years of study. However, his apprenticeship was not the culmination of a dream so much as a catalyst for his ever growing world of bonsai. Now, Ryan is putting into action the things he learned from his great master, and expanding on them through the realization of International Bonsai Mirai.

Ryan is excited to be involved with the convention, and is looking forward to both understanding the development of bonsai in Australia and sharing his observations on the development of bonsai in the US.



Interstate Demonstrators

Averil Stanley



Averil has been involved in the art of bonsai since 1969, a time when exposure to bonsai resources, tools, plant material and guidance was extremely limited. Her enthusiasm led her to join a local bonsai club giving her exposure to renowned bonsai artists including Saburo Kato, Tom Yamamoto, John Naka, Kahn Komai, Yuji Yoshimura, Peter Adams, William Valavanis, Kevin Willson and many others who have influenced her unique style which is based mainly on classical bonsai design.

She honed her knowledge and skills through art and horticultural studies and qualifications in training and assessment, which complement her extensive bonsai demonstration and course commitments.

In 1986 she hosted a solo exhibition of her private bonsai collection of over 200 quality bonsai specimens at Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens. Her collection boasts mainly Japanese black pines, junipers, azaleas, ficus species, bougainvillea, clerodendron, casuarina, swamp cypress, celtis, trident maples and elms of all sizes and styles, including carving and driftwood. Her favoured styles are literati, semi cascade, broom and driftwood.

Averil currently has a busy workshop, course, demonstration and judging schedule, both locally and nationally, and is a tutor on the AABC Register of National Demonstrators.

She is currently Secretary of Sunshine Coast Bonsai Society and a member of the Selection and Ambassadorial Committee of the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia.

Andrew Ward



Andrew is particularly adept at saikei and rock/mallee settings, although he is able to work on other styles and areas of bonsai. He has visited a number of Australian Bonsai Clubs under the sponsorship of the AABC Visiting Tutor Program over the past few years where he has been able to share his enthusiasm, knowledge and experiences with others. His favourite plants are the various ficus, plus ash, elms and junipers.

Andrew has travelled widely, including to China in 2006 where he was able to experience penjing first hand. He has travelled to bonsai nurseries, exhibits and private collections throughout Australia. He has attended national conventions and been influenced by other bonsai artists including Hirotoishi Saito (Japan), Michael Persiano (USA), Bill Valavanis (USA), Charles Ceronio (South Africa), Janet Sabey and other demonstrators through the AABC Visiting Tutor Program.

Most importantly for Andrew, bonsai is the journey. It is a process that is achieved through time and study. It is more than the individual, the plant or the pot. To Andrew, it is the symbiotic combination of all these elements plus art, horticultural science and the philosophies of those who contribute to the ongoing evolution of the developing bonsai art that is paramount.

Local Demonstrators

Roger Hnatiuk



Roger has extensive experience in studying the forms of Australian woody plants and their natural environments. Discovering what Australian species look like and passing on those discoveries became a passion which Roger has shared through initiating the Australian Plants as Bonsai Study Group in 2001 and the national *Australian Native Plants as Bonsai* exhibition first held in 2003. The Australian Plants as Bonsai Study Group has now commenced a joint project with [Ausbonsai.com](https://ausbonsai.com) to record and document what is known about growing Australian species as bonsai.

Roger has a strong interest in the role that art plays in the design and creation of bonsai and drawing on the natural environment, especially old trees, in shaping miniature trees that evoke a place, landscape or feelings experienced in a special or familiar place. This interest inspired Roger to create his own bonsai pots that reflect Australian landscapes and complement Australian plants.

Roger was the catalyst behind the establishment of the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia and the inaugural Chair of its Bonsai Management Committee. He is also recording an oral history of bonsai in Australia.

Roger's passion, energy, artistry and commitment to the evolution of bonsai in Australia have inspired many in the Australian bonsai community.

Leigh Taafe



Leigh first became interested in bonsai over 20 years ago and fully embraced it as a hobby after visiting a bonsai nursery in Perth. He used hard earned pocket money to quickly build a collection of bonsai, which had to be sold when he moved back to Canberra, his home town. Leigh continued to pursue bonsai as a hobby while finishing a degree in Information Technology.

After 10 years in the IT industry Leigh decided to turn his hobby into a business, initially by attending local markets, then opening a retail outlet, Ledanta Bonsai Nursery, inside a larger garden/nursery complex.

Leigh has run bonsai classes, conducted many workshops and demonstrations for local bonsai clubs, at Floriade and for the *Australian Native Plants as Bonsai* exhibition. Leigh is a regular contributor to the Canberra Bonsai Society newsletter's 'From the Workbench' section. Leigh has recently been appointed the assistant curator of the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia, working alongside Grant Bowie. He is comfortable working with all types of trees, restyling, carving and bending as well as training tiny shohin.

The National Arboretum Canberra and the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia

The bush fires that ravaged Canberra in 2003 were the catalyst for the creation of the National Arboretum Canberra (NAC), the international arboretum and gardens envisaged by Walter Burley Griffin so many years ago. It provides an opportunity to conserve threatened species, a place for community recreation and a valuable resource for ongoing education and research.

The National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia (NBPCA) is the first national, permanent collection of bonsai in Australia. From, early 2013 it will be housed next to the Visitor Centre at the NAC (shown to the left of the image).

Guided tours of the NAC and the NBPCA are scheduled on Friday 17 May and Monday 20 May. Guides from Friends of the National Arboretum will provide interesting stories behind the selection and planting of species chosen for the 100 forests that make up the National Arboretum. These tours have proved immensely popular with locals and the many interstate visitors to Floriade each year. Curator Grant Bowie will show tour groups through the superb new site for the NBPCA and discuss the trees currently on display.

Tours of the NAC and NBPCA will only run if there are sufficient bookings. Where tours are oversubscribed or under subscribed, we will contact people who have booked for those tours to arrange an alternative time.

Tours run for 2 hours each and times are given in the programme and on the Registration Form. Buses for all tours leave from Rydges Lakeside Canberra.

For people taking tours on Friday 17 May, early registration will be available at Rydges Lakeside Canberra 30 minutes before each tour starts.



Venue

The 2013 AABC Convention is being held at Rydges Lakeside Canberra Hotel, 1 London Circuit, Canberra City, ACT, right in the city centre and on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin. The central location, spectacular views, outstanding accommodation and exemplary service ensure that guests are treated to a memorable stay in the nation's capital.

Rydges Lakeside Canberra rooms were fully refurbished in early 2012, providing a higher level of comfort for guests and featuring all new furnishings and upgraded bathrooms with spacious walk-in showers.

The organising committee has arranged a discounted room rate of \$175 for the convention. A block reservation has been made, and rooms will be held until 18 March 2013. Please book your accommodation by contacting Rydges Lakeside Canberra directly on 02 6247 6244 or emailing reservations_canberra@rydges.com. You will need to quote the block code R-1005BON.

The Locanda Steakhouse, located on the ground floor, offers full buffet breakfasts from 6.30am – 10am, and is also open for lunch and dinner service 7 days a week. Room service is 24 hours, with limited menu after 10pm.

Convention facilities are located on the 1st floor of the hotel, with the plenary sessions being held in Lake Superior Room, and the exhibition and sales areas located in Lake Michigan and Lake Huron rooms. The latter will also be used for workshops on Monday.

The Welcome Reception will be held in Skylines, the 15th floor function venue which has fabulous views across Lake Burley Griffin and the glittering lights of Canberra City. The Convention Dinner will be held in the Eureka Ballroom on the ground floor.

Getting there



The hotel is approximately 10 minutes west of the airport, with taxi fares being approximately \$20 - \$25. Or you can catch the Airport Express shuttle bus which costs \$10 each way, and drops off at West Row in the city, a 5 – 10 minute walk to Rydges Lakeside Canberra.

If travelling south by car along Northbourne Ave, turn right at London Circuit and the hotel is on your right at the second set of traffic lights.

Car parking is available at the hotel for \$12 per day (subject to availability). There is also paid parking opposite the front of the hotel from Monday – Friday. This parking is free on weekends. Turn left at the first set of lights on London Circuit after turning right off Northbourne Avenue.



Programme

Friday - May 17th

12:00pm – 2:00pm	Tour 1 - The National Arboretum Canberra and National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia. Tour leaves from Rydges Lakeside Canberra
2:30pm – 4:30pm	Tour 2 - The National Arboretum Canberra and National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia. Tour leaves from Rydges Lakeside Canberra
5:30pm – 7:30pm	Registration
7:00pm – 10:00pm	Welcome reception
6:30pm – 9:00pm	Exhibition open

Saturday – May 18th

8:00am – 8.45am	Registration
8.50am – 9.00am	Opening ceremony
9.00am – 9:15am	NBPCA Presentation
9:15am – 10:00am	The Australian Journey Part 1 - Roger Hnatiuk
10:00am – 10:30am	Morning tea
10:30am – 12:30pm	Demonstration - Ryan Neil
12:30pm – 1:30pm	Lunch
1:30pm – 3:00pm	Demonstration - Averil Stanley
3:00pm – 3:30pm	Afternoon tea
3:30pm – 4:30pm	Demonstration - Ryan Neil
4:30pm – 4:45pm	Day 1 Raffle Draw
5:00pm – 6:00pm	AABC Annual General Meeting
7:00pm – 11:00pm	Convention Dinner



Sunday – May 19th

7:45am – 8.50am	Registration
8:00am – 8:50am	Display tree critique - Ryan Neil
9:00am – 10:30am	Demonstration - Andrew Ward
10:30am – 11:00am	Morning tea
11:00am – 12:00pm	Demonstration - Ryan Neil
12:00pm – 1:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm – 2:30pm	Demonstration - Ryan Neil
2:30pm – 3:00pm	Afternoon tea
3:00pm – 4:00pm	Demonstration - Leigh Taafe
4:00 pm – 4:30pm	The Australian Journey Part 2 - Roger Hnatiuk
4:30pm – 4:45pm	Day 2 Raffle Draw
4:45pm – 5:00pm	2014 Convention Presentation - 2014 Host Club
5:00pm – 5:10pm	Convention close

Monday – May 20th

9:00am – 12:00pm	Masterclass Workshop - Ryan Neil
9:00am – 12:00pm	Workshop - Averil Stanley
10:00am – 12:00pm	Tour 3 - The National Arboretum Canberra and National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia. Tour leaves from Rydges Lakeside Canberra
12:00pm – 1:00pm	Lunch (at delegates own cost - there are many eateries nearby)
1:00pm – 3:00pm	Tour 4 - The National Arboretum Canberra and National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia. Tour leaves from Rydges Lakeside Canberra
1:00pm – 4:00pm	Masterclass Workshop - Ryan Neil
1:00pm – 4:00pm	Workshop - Andrew Ward

Registration and Payment

Full registration includes all demonstrations on Saturday and Sunday, display tree critique on Sunday, entry to the Exhibition and Sales area, lunch, morning and afternoon tea on both days and Convention kit.

Day registration includes all demonstrations on Saturday OR Sunday, display tree critique on Sunday if registration is for Sunday, entry to the Exhibition and Sales area, lunch, morning and afternoon tea on the chosen day and Convention kit.

Optional activities: Tours of the National Arboretum Canberra and the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia, the Welcome Reception, the Convention Dinner and Masterclass Workshops and Workshops on Monday all incur additional fees.

Registration and payment for the Convention, and any optional activities, must be received by CBS **before 1 May 2013**.

Earlybird Registration is available before 1 November 2012.

Your options for registering and paying fees for the convention are as follows:

Registration

A separate registration is required for each participant and must be received by CBS **before 1 May 2013**.

You can register online at www.cbs.org.au/2013AABC/register.html. We will send you an email confirming receipt of your registration.

You can also register by completing the enclosed Registration Form and posting it to the address shown. Additional copies of the form can be downloaded from the Convention website or obtained from your club secretary.

Payment

You can pay by

- Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)/Direct Deposit to the account shown on the Convention website and on the Registration Form.
When making payment by EFT/Direct Deposit, please ensure that you include the participant's surname and initial as a reference so we can match deposits to registration.
- Australian participants can also pay by personal or bank cheque, or money order, forwarded with the Registration Form if you have chosen to use this registration method.
- International participants who wish to pay other than by EFT must pay by bank draft/cheque, forwarded with the Registration Form if you have chosen to use this registration method. Personal cheques are not able to be accepted from international participants.

All payments must be made in Australian dollars.

Convention contacts

For more information please contact us on:

Phone: +61 (0)404 355 394

Email: registration@cbs.org.au

Website: www.cbs.org.au/2013AABC

What else to do while you are in Canberra

We are particularly pleased to host the 2013 Convention as 2013 is Canberra's centenary year. Throughout the year there will be many events to celebrate this milestone in the national capital's history. We hope that you will have time to take in some of these events.

Canberra offers visitors a range of attractions including national institutions such as the National Gallery of Australia, National Museum of Australia, National Library of Australia, National Portrait Gallery, Museum of Australian Democracy, the Australian War Memorial, Questacon National Science and Technology Centre and, of course, Parliament House.

There are many parks, gardens and nature reserves including the Australian National Botanic Gardens, Commonwealth Park, Tidbinbilla nature reserve, Cockington Green Gardens and the National Arboretum Canberra, which houses the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia. There are also markets and gourmet food and wine venues, a wide range of restaurants and sporting activities at the Australian Institute of Sport and other venues around the city.

The region surrounding Canberra also offers a range of activities.

To help you plan your visit to Canberra, a copy of the Canberra Capital Region visitor guide 2012, which highlights the wide range of activities and venues available, and includes a map of Canberra, is included in the Convention promotional pack. Copies will also be sent to all clubs.

Additional events and other activities in 2013 will start to be promoted later this year.

To find out what additional activities are happening, check www.visitcanberra.com.au

To find out more about Canberra's centenary celebrations visit www.canberra100.com.au



Our Sponsors and Supporters

We would like to thank the following organisations for helping to make this event a great experience for everyone.



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We would also like to thank the bonsai artists who have allowed us to use images of their trees in this booklet to illustrate the breadth and diversity of bonsai in Australia.

Host Club: Canberra Bonsai Society Inc

Canberra Bonsai Society Inc meets at 9:00am on the first Saturday of each month (except January and October) at Hughes Community Centre, Hughes ACT.

We offer members the opportunity to develop bonsai knowledge and skills through monthly meetings including demonstrations, presentations and workshops, an informative newsletter and comprehensive library and sales of bonsai-related items at discount prices.

CBS members act as volunteer guides and help maintain the bonsai on display at the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia, currently in Commonwealth Park, Canberra, moving to the National Arboretum Canberra in early 2013.

