



REDDITCH BONSAI

GEORGE BRADLEY.

It was with great sadness that we recently had to report to you that our former member and long time friend, George Bradley, had passed away at the age of 80 years.

To be honest I can't remember exactly when we first met George but we soon became aware of his expertise in the art of bonsai and his willingness to share that knowledge, which never dimmed.

Something that you may not realise is that George was a man of many parts – not just bonsai. Over the years he has had interests in, amongst other things, breeding owls, zebra finches and even tortoises, growing cacti, collecting Japanese bronzes and Samurai swords, shooting and fishing – the latter often taking him on expeditions to France.

We are all aware of his expertise in Bonsai and I have many memories of him, but the one I remember quite often is his statement that “You don't get old bark on a young tree” – think about it! R and A.

Here are a few reflections from members which we thought it appropriate to share with you at this time.

George was a real Gentleman. He had so much knowledge regarding bonsai and he was so good with the horticulture and art of bonsai. He gave so many wonderful demonstrations over the years and displayed his trees in the UK and Europe winning many awards. Like so many I will miss him so much. Mark Skan.

George showed me basics of potting on a beginners night. He then over the next few weeks taught me other techniques. Still have juniper in question. Remember his kind encouragement. Jim Ridley.

This is very sad news! I always enjoyed his 'old school' lectures that he gave at the MBS. Only met him a couple of times but had great respect for his knowledge of Bonsai and general gardening. Best wishes to his family at this awful time. Kindest regards. Russell Andrews.

Sad news, I liked George very much, he was generous with his knowledge and always helpful. Jim Kynes.

A great guy, always willing to help and offer advice. We were due to meet up but unfortunately Covid intervention prevented George from coming over to help me out.

His easy, pleasant, laid back attitude made him great company.

RIP George. Paul Gannon

A sad, sad time. George was always brilliant and willing at sharing and encouraging others with his knowledge and enthusiasm and experience with bonsai . Such good memories.

John Clarke

I first got to know George many years ago when I decided it was about time I joined a bonsai club. Although I had been growing bonsai since the early eighties, I wanted to learn more than the books I had acquired could tell me. I picked the Redditch Bonsai Society. George was a member then and it was he, together with Mark Skan who encouraged me to also join the Midland.

George was extremely knowledgeable and had some awesome trees. He also came to both clubs to give demonstrations and was always happy to share his expertise. I am sure that he will be remembered as a true gentleman, and sadly missed. Judith Davison.

SHOW REPORT.

Sunday, 12th June, saw the Midland Bonsai Society (MBS) and the Redditch Bonsai Society (RBS) return to the Birmingham Botanical Gardens (BBG) to put on another splendid and classic Annual Display Show Exhibition.

This time around, the weather was more on our side and held up for the most part throughout the day. It was a good day out all in all.

Footfall was fair, if not modest but still a good turnout with families, friends, couples and singles alike all chatting and mingling. You could see people of all ages, from all communities and walks of life enjoying and appreciating the fine selection of quality Bonsai trees we had on display.

I am dutifully informed that judging by the number of votes cast for the Peoples Tree Award, we had a good few hundred walk through the doors at the very least. (295 votes cast so probably c. 330 people)

There was a decent variety of trees many in full-leaf and full-bloom with their spring and early summer colour. In total, 75 trees were displayed, of which 63 had number

tiles that were officially being judged. This was still a very good effort by all members of both Societies. The standard was still exceptionally high.

The weather was mostly fair and held off for us for the most part which meant that it was mostly bright and sunny with a tad overcast patchy clouds. This made the lighting in the room a bit intermittent at times.

There was the usual small flurry, trickle and wave of people coming and going. It was a hive of activity.

Highlights:

A stunning ensemble and eclectic mix of Bonsai.

The two azaleas were in full-bloom and added that much needed 'pop' of colour that was sure to brighten any room.

The acers and maples were in full leaf and really stood out from the crowd with their bright and vibrant contrasting tones against the interior decor.

The pines looked fresh and smart in appearance perhaps adding that fresh pine forest scent to the room.

A lot of interest was also shown over by the beginner and starter tables, with members of the public asking lots of questions about how best to go about getting into Bonsai. This stimulated lots of conversation.

The new Chief Executive of Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Sara Blair-Manning, made an appearance and introduced herself to a few select Members and Members of the Committee, and asked how, what and if there was anything else they could do improve on the facilities for us. Perhaps lighting and 'saggy' tables?

I think we did really well considering the circumstances. Being several men (and women) down.

We did well to step up to the plate (of biscuits) as well as to present and arrange Members' Bonsai trees in the best light possible.

Thanks also to Peter for his offer of stepping up and helping out, especially at such short notice.

Considering we were a man down without our Show Sec, John Ville. I think all members would like to express their best thoughts and wishes - in that we hope he gets well soon and makes a speedy recovery.

Also, our best thoughts and wishes to our Club Secretary - come 'human megaphone', Richard Gilkes who was duly missed but with that said, we have now discovered that Teanah also has a big pair of lungs! Perhaps we can 'commandeer' those 'tests' from Richard next year!

Angela will be delighted to know she still has a job as 'tea lady' and has NOT been replaced by robots, just yet.

Despite my best efforts, my ironing skills didn't make much difference to the creases in the linen. Albeit, maybe some of the larger creases. Perhaps I had it on the wrong setting? Ladies...? Although, I did get several offers and comments to iron peoples shirts... Let's not go there... Speaking of which, the linen 'could' do with a wash and clean for next year? Hint hint! I think forgetting to go home with the iron and extension cable might have been an omen... I tried.

This year we didn't use the black table 'skirts' so electrical tape was not needed. Opting for more of the 'open air' - legs out look-style-vibe. This (perhaps) made the room look a bit bigger and brighter and maybe even gave the illusion of adding a lot more light in the room for it to bounce around.

Throughout the morning and afternoon we were kept topped up with refreshments of tea, coffee biscuits and juice. They were very much appreciated and went down well.

During the afternoon, although there was no 'Official' Speaker, Judith dutifully stepped up - by sitting down, to the occasion. Delivering, I am informed, a very intimate, yet humble, personal account and recollection of her own personal experiences and journey in Bonsai - for practically an hour! I am informed she had a captivated audience where she took visitors on a marauding voyage of discovery from Beginners Bonsai, Pots, Styles, Photography and much, much more. They certainly got their value for money there!

David commented that trade was "decent" and Sharon mentioned trade was "busy", which is always good to hear.

The tombola did well and was a popular 'tourist attraction' - as ever. I won a painting. I'm sure it's a Picasso... Or could it be a Banksy? Knowing my 'luck' it would've been drawn by an Elephant called Sid! I'm waiting for Antiques Roadshow...

Although we ran out of time to announce and present the Awards Ceremony, we did however all get to go home with our Bonsai trees in one piece. There were NO 'casualties' (as far as I am aware).

I hope you enjoy the photos/slideshow and I hope this made you smile.

Please keep a look out for another e-mail from me where I will e-mail/provide you

with a copy of your Bonsai trees in a Folder for your own personal records and future reference. It will be a package/folder containing a collection of your Bonsai trees.

See you next year. Let’s hope it is bigger, better and brighter than before.

Your 'challenge' (for next year) is to add (yet) another tree to what you (might have) brought along this year. This will allow us to offer, display, exhibit and showcase even more to paying members of the general public and share such a fun and 'timely' hobby. More cultivars/species/varieties, shapes, styles and stories, if you please.

So there is lots and lots to look forward to.

All the best.

Alex

RESULTS					
Class	1ST	2ND	HC		
Master	10 (Judith)	8 (Vic)	6 (Vic)		
Open	18 (James)	12 (Judith)	13 (Peter)		
Group	3 (Judith)	4 (Judith)	1 (Chris Brown)		
Landscapes & Rock Plantings	24 (Robert)	17 David C			
Chuhin	16 (David C.)	34 (James)	26 (James)		
Shohin	45 (Wes)	40 (Wes)	46 (Wes)		
Mame	58 (James)	57 (Robert)	53 (Judith)		
Starter	64 (Peter)	59 (Anne)	60 (Anne)		
People's Tree	13 (Peter)	26 (James)	35 (James)		Total 295 Votes Cast

Editor’s note – there is a list of the entries if anyone wants to see/have it. If so let me know. “Anne” is Anne Rowland (MBS).

DAVID CHESHIRE.

David continues to collect all the right accolades for his show displays. A GOLD at Chelsea this year (again) was followed recently by the PLATINUM AWARD at Gardeners World Live at the N.E.C. He’s off to TATTON PARK shortly. Good luck and well done!

On an administrative note David's preferred email address is now info@davidcheshirenurseries.co.uk

MBS JULY MEETING.

The JULY meeting will be a workshop. Unfortunately GIL MURRAY is unable to "run" the event which was programmed so it's a plain old workshop I'm afraid. Angela and I send our apologies as we are visiting Belfast to see our eldest son's new house and then travelling down to Castletown.

REDDITCH JULY MEETING.

This meeting is intended as a garden visit. Volunteers step forward. Details to follow!

As at the date of publication no offers yet received!

Richard Gilkes, Editor. 28th June 2022.