



Roots & Branches

The Origins and Directions of the Ann Arbor Bonsai Society

ISSUE #2 JANUARY 2020

Miniature Tree Grower Organizing Bonsai Club

From the Ann Arbor News (August 1970)

A Webster Township woman who recently won a prize at the 12th annual Midwest Bonsai Show in Chicago wants to form a club in Washtenaw County for people who want to cultivate the ancient Japanese art of growing miniature trees.

Mrs. Howard Westman won second prize in the novice division for deciduous trees with her entry of an 18 inch tall birch tree that she had grown in a small pot.

Cultivating Bonsai (pronounced "bone-sigh" and meaning tray plants) has been practiced by the Japanese for centuries. It is a method of dwarfing a tree by confining its growth to a small pot and continually pruning its roots and branches. After 10-150 years of this, you'll get a fully formed tree with gnarled branches.

Mrs. Westman's interest in bonsai began several years ago when, for some reason not yet fully understood, the Douglas firs on her husband's tree farm did not grow.

She then began to try to grow bonsai in pots, and today she has a variety of miniature trees, including white pines, birch, firs and ginkgoes.

Bonsai require much attention and care, including watering and fertilizing. They will grow from one inch to four feet tall.

Trees suitable for dwarfing include maple, fir, cedar, beech, sweetgum, spruce, oak, hemlock, wisteria, elm, crabapple, peach, plum, cherry, and apricot.

Mrs. Westman says she will be happy to provide information on how to grow bonsai. She may be contacted by phone.

Miniature Tree Grower Organizing Bonsai Club



Bonsai Birch Tree

Mrs. Howard Westman of 8980 Chamberlain, Dexter, won a prize at the 12th annual Midwest Bonsai Show in Chicago with this 18-inch-tall birch tree she had grown in a small pot. The tree is *Betula papyrifera* (pa-

per birch). The show was attended by more than 10,000. Mrs. Westman wants to form a club in Washtenaw County for people who want to cultivate the ancient Japanese art of growing miniature trees.

A Webster Township woman who recently won a prize at the 12th Annual Midwest Bonsai Show in Chicago wants to form a club in Washtenaw County for people who want to cultivate the ancient Japanese art of growing miniature trees.

Mrs. Howard Westman of 8980 Chamberlain, won second prize in the novice division for deciduous trees with her entry of a 18-inch-tall birch tree she had grown in a small pot.

Cultivating bonsai (pronounced "bone-sigh" and meaning "tray plants") has been practiced by the Japanese for centuries. It is a method of dwarfing a tree by confining its growth to a small pot and continually pruning its roots and branches. After 10 to 150 years of this, you'll get a fully formed miniature tree with gnarled branches.

Mrs. Westman's interest in bonsai began several years ago when, for reasons not yet fully understood, the Douglas firs on her husband's tree farm did not grow.

She then began to try to grow bonsai in pots, and today she has a variety of miniature trees, including white pines, birch, firs and ginkos.

Bonsai require much attention and care, including watering and fertilizing. They will grow from one inch to four feet tall.

Trees suitable for dwarfing include maple, fir, cedar, beech, sweetgum, spruce, oak, hemlock, wisteria, elm, crabapple, peach, plum, cherry and apricot.

Mrs. Westman says she will be happy to provide information on how to grow bonsai. She may be contacted at 426-4927.

The above tree is *Betula papyrifera* (paper bark birch). The show was attended by more than 10,000. Mrs. Westman wants to form a club in Washtenaw County for people who want to cultivate the ancient Japanese art of growing miniature trees.

NEXT WEEK: *The First Meeting*

HOW YOU CAN HELP WITH OUR 50TH CELEBRATION

1. To help us in this celebration effort, all Ann Arbor Bonsai Society members present and past, and all others wishing to contribute are invited to submit personal statements (60 words or less) to be published in our Yearbook. Each text contributor is also strongly encouraged to submit a favorite photo (with caption) of a bonsai tree or a bonsai activity to accompany his or her personal statement. (We can scan old prints or digitize color slides for anyone needing this help with old pictures.) [Upload Form is here](#)
2. Show your support for the Ann Arbor Bonsai Society with a T-Shirt Purchase. Order by February 7th to get the best price. Celebrate the 50th Anniversary in style with shirts that have our commemorative logo printed on the front. The first shipment of these shirts will be available for you at our first meeting February 26, 2020, if you preorder by February 7, 2020. [Order Here](#)



Ann Arbor Bonsai Society
aabonsaisociety@gmail.com
<http://www.annarborbonsaisociety.org>