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## SOMERSET BONSAI SOCIETY

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Bonsai Newsletter February 2026



**A selection of lots ready for the auction.**

Welcome to the February meeting report. February is now the time for our annual auction and for the last couple of months the committee has been busy encouraging members to part with their unwanted items either as commissioned lots or preferably, donations to the Society. This is always a bit of a struggle as we all become attached to our trees and pots but in the end something has to go and luckily enough people brought in items for us to fill the evening.

The doors opened at 18:45 for sellers to register their items and there was a steady stream of members eager to get their lots on the tables and start looking at what others had brought. As in previous years there was a wide variety of trees, ranging from basic starter material and seedlings, to mature specimens. A lot of pots; mame, shohin and chuhin right up to one you could have taken a bath in! Chinese and Japanese ceramic pots along with a few Korean mica pots were all represented and once the auction started they generated some competitive bidding. There were also a few display stands, some tool wallets and a set of Japanese scrolls with interchangeable pictures. In total we had around 50 lots and an eager audience ready to go.



**Auctioneer John takes charge of the lots.**

Time for the first lot its 19:30. However, before we started the auction there were several awards to present. First up was the Tree of the Month Advanced winner for 2025, which you may remember was Bob. Next up was Zac, taking the Novice award in the Tree of the Month competition. Finally I was awarded the Member of the Year plaque, away being engraved as I type.



**Bob receiving his award for the Tree of the Month competition**

Our auctioneer for the evening was our President John and he was ably assisted by our Treasurer Roger, balancing the books and auction runners Richard and Richard, keeping the lots coming.

Auctions are always an interesting experience. You have your pot of money, unless you are one of the lucky people who don't worry about how much things cost, you have your list of things that you want to purchase and you know that other people are also interested in the same things. But how interested are they and how much do you really want to spend? If you are lucky and get your chosen items, all is good and you can relax and enjoy the rest of the show but when you are 'pipped at the post' or downright thrashed by other bidders then the panic starts in. You have to buy something, anything and that is when you end up going home with an odd assortment of items that are going to be difficult to explain to your significant others. All good fun.



**John explains the rules once again!**

But I digress. How is the auction going? The lots flowed across the auctioneer's table and prices were good. Several trees made appreciable figures, helped no doubt by having several bidders intent on getting them, whilst other items went for more modest sums but it all helps the club.



**Hushed silence before the bidding begins again**

And so the night went on and the sold lots mounted up. A large wooden table; suitable for a show ready tree; a nice shohin size Scots pine that attracted some serious bids; several large quality Chinese pots and yet more mame/shohin pots. So it goes on. But all things must come to an end and by 9.00 pm the bidding was over. Now comes the intricate part of getting the money in and then paying the money out. This is a lot harder than you would think and I have to give credit to Roger who handled it without a hitch. Everybody was happy with their purchases and there were only a couple of items unsold. Our auctioneer also commented that once again, nothing sold for 25p. All items made at least a couple of pounds and a few almost made three figures.

Well, that's all for now. Next meeting is on the 11th March and will be a repotting workshop, so lots of repotting, root pruning and maybe a bit of "general tidying up" !

The tree of the month will be back, with "Best pot/tree combination" as the topic.

Till the next time, stay safe and "keep doing bonsai".

Alistair