



NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

Green Square Community Hall
3 Joynton Avenue
Zetland

7pm Tuesday 9 August 2011

Wiring & Pruning of deciduous trees continued. Repotting & root pruning of deciduous bonsai

7pm Tuesday 12 September 2011

Wiring & Pruning of broad leaf evergreen trees

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COMMITTEE

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Vice President Sue

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MEMBERSHIP

Full Membership \$40.00

Concession \$25.00

Family \$55.00

Pensioner \$25.00

Welcome to the August Newsletter

August Meeting

Wiring & Pruning of deciduous trees continued. Now is a good time for repotting & root pruning deciduous bonsai



It was smiles all round at our July Club Meetings – the Green Square Community Hall is a great venue with lots of space and it is air conditioned.

PLEASE NOTE MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE

In this month's newsletter:

- For picture taken at last month's meeting see page 2
- Potology Article Part 2 pages 3 - 5
- For an article on notes taken at Peter Adams' presentation at the Ideas Summit earlier this year see pages 5 - 6
- Events Calendar page 6

Pictures from the July Club Meeting



Two images of the new venue for those who were unable to attend last month's meeting



The new club venue has a large working space, a generous sized kitchen and separate male & female toilet facilities, good lighting and heating. Check it out at our August meeting if you could not make the July meeting



Alan's Dwarf English Elm after initial pruning



Paul's 7 yr old London Plane bonsai



Alan's Dwarf English Elm before initial pruning



Hector's Crepe Myrtle bonsai

POTOLOGY Part 2 by Lee

Handmade Pots – Working Art

There is a joy in selecting, buying and using handmade pots. When you buy from the potter it is nice getting to know the person who made the pot and that makes the pot more special. You are not just buying a pot; you are now buying working art.

Even if the potter is selling several 'identical' pots each pot is individual and will have differences so you are buying a 'one off'. You get pots that better suit our trees, especially our natives that to my mind look much better in matt or semi gloss than high gloss. You can get a pot tailored to suit a specific tree, you can often get this pot in that finish and you can find idiosyncratic pots that you will seldom find in mass produced pots. Even more exciting, the glazes are wonderful. They are varied, difference, often exciting – but not so exciting as to overwhelm the tree.

The only downside of handmade pots is their addictive quality. It is sooooo easy to get more than you need because handmade pots are so beautiful you simply can't have too many. As if that was a bad thing!



This olive does not suit a conventional pot. I tried many and none suited the tree. This MIRKWOOD pot successfully grounded the olive and gave it a context of harsh terrain compatible with the hard grown look of it.

COMMISSIONING a POT

Commissioning a pot has considerations. When someone is quicker than you are and buys the pot you wanted you can ask the potter to make another. In this instance any differences in the pot will be not be a problem because you will not have the original to compare and he is reproducing one of his own.

If you give the potter a photo of someone else's pot you can expect differences. Potters have their own glazes so the glaze could be similar but not exact. Good potters are artists and not copyists so you won't get a pot exactly like the photo and that's a good thing. It allows the potter originality to produce a similar pot with his own personality in it and you have an original, not a copy.

I understand little about glazes except it can be difficult to reproduce a happy accident and if you order a pot with an idiosyncratic glaze you cannot expect the commission to be exactly as the original.

An overseas potter did not answer my two emails about pots of his so I sent the photo of two pots with the same wonderful 'champagne yellow' glaze to Pat Kennedy and Penny Davis with the measurements I wanted and their choice as to which pot they reproduced. I knew I would not get a copy or identical pots and I didn't.

From Pat of MIRKWOOD I got an elegant pot with a beautiful two part glaze, rich and warm. I can take advantage of a soft golden speckled colouration or position the tree so that I get the golden speckle alongside the stippled deeper colouration. What joy is that!!!



From Penny of MUDLARK I got the other style in a warm golden semi gloss with a wonderful pitted area. When someone asked to buy the pot I declined because I am learning that it would be hard to replicate that pitting and it adds so much character to the pot.



Two different pots from two potters and had they both chosen the same style the pots still would have been individual. I had no problems commissioning two because I knew each pot would be special in its own way.

NSW is lucky to have these two major potters dedicated to producing unique bonsai pots and the stronger our enthusiasm becomes and the better our trees become the more we should support them. The wares they make greatly enhance Australian bonsai and only by supporting our potters can we be assured of their continual services bettering our trees.

Bonsai (盆栽 **Japanese**) (*lit. plantings in tray*)

The Japanese tradition dates back over a thousand years, and has evolved its own unique aesthetics and terminology.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bonsai>

POTOLOGY Part 2 by Lee

Two MUDLARK pots. The glaze on Pot (1) is ideal for olives, natives and flowering trees.



Pot (1)



Pot (2)

The glaze on Pot (2) picks up the bark colours of lighter barked natives very well. In each case the other side of the pots presents a different pattern so you have a selection of two pots in one. Penny does a lot of experimentation in glazes and it would be hard to get two pots similar.

Pat Kennedy Mirkwood Forest Bonsai Pottery 02 6946 2956 0400 216 563 patspots@bigpond.com Adelong NSW, Snowy Mts area

Penny Davis Mudlark Studio Pottery 02 4959 4482
mudlarkpottery@bigpond.com www.bonsaipotsau.blogspot.com
[Blackalls Park – Newcastle NSW area]

OVERSEAS POTTERS

With the exchange rate so favourable now is the time to shop overseas. I have purchased from Erin in Bristol England and Iker Bonsai Pots in Ohio, USA. With both these potters the communication has been excellent, service has been exemplary and all pots arrived extremely well and economically packed and in perfect condition.

A bit of advice. If you see a pot or pots you want to buy, ask the potter to take a photo of the pot outside and be sure you have a photo of the top of the pot. I have found, despite a simply superb website, some colours were substantially different from the actual pot. A rich golden glaze was really a beige; a turquoise was navy and a pot that was the colour in the photo had a very thick rim that hadn't been shown. Since the measurements were external this made a big difference. It is also a good idea to ask for internal measurements if only external measurements are listed.

It isn't a big ask to take a pot from the shelf, put it outside and take a quick shot to show the true colour and the rim, download and post it.

Minutes only as opposed to the disappointment to find the colour is not what you wanted when the pots arrive.

These are some of the websites I have sourced and I have bought from Erin and Iker.

Erin pots tend to be roughly made but their emphasis is on the glaze. Just take a second thought to balance the pot measurements against the strength of the glaze. Some of their glazes are far too strong and would totally overwhelm the tree. Some of their pots are far too chunky for the size tree that would fit into them.

Iker pots are exquisitely made, simply superb. His glazes and colours are excellent but ask for an outside photo as actual colours can differ from what is posted. I will say, when I complained to Chuck Iker about the colour differences in two pots his immediate response was to issue me a refund. This I refused because I knew I could sell the pots for the landed cost. So he is an honourable seller and that means a lot. And he didn't mind taking a snap of another pot. Erin is the same.

www.ikerbonsaipots.com

Mini and shohin enthusiasts check out Iker

www.erinbonsai.com

Interesting glazes but pots can be overwhelming for tree size

www.stonemonkeyceramics.uk.co

Magnificent but you need to be well heeled

www.langbonsai.com

Beautiful pots but didn't answer my two emails

www.gobbs.org/potters

Leads to a lot of North American potters, some historical, some active

www.ibonsaiclub.forumation.com/forum - go to POTS and look up Dale Cochoy – some amazingly beautiful pots worth checking out. He doesn't have his own website but there is enough to drool over in ibonsaiclub.

Internet bonsai pot shopping is more favourable for the smaller sizes. Prices seem more comparable to local prices and shipping is more reasonable. One must always consider shipping costs. As a rough guide, if a pot costs \$15 mentally double the cost to cover the freight component and order several pots to spread costs.

The potter will give you a freight rate but give the potter the courtesy of his time and effort and email 'thank you but no thank you' if the cost is too high. But if you think \$30 when you look at a \$15 dollar price or \$60 if the pot is \$30, you will get a fair idea. This is why I stay away from larger pots that sell for \$60 or more. From Iker, a \$15 pot landed for \$24 and a \$24 pot landed for \$35 so I was laughing.

For many enthusiasts a standard commercial pot will do well enough but there is an additional joy working with trees that are in handmade pots. It is the difference between Best and Less and Designer clothes for us.

Surely our styling efforts and achievements deserve the very best and the very best is handmade pots.



A beautiful and unusual Iker mini pot which will host a mini olive stump in due course.



An Erin pot – the soft oval and muted tones set off the mini Port Jackson very nicely. Check their websites for more.

NOTES from Peter Adams Presentation at The IDEAS SUMMIT JULY 2011

TRIDENT MAPLES

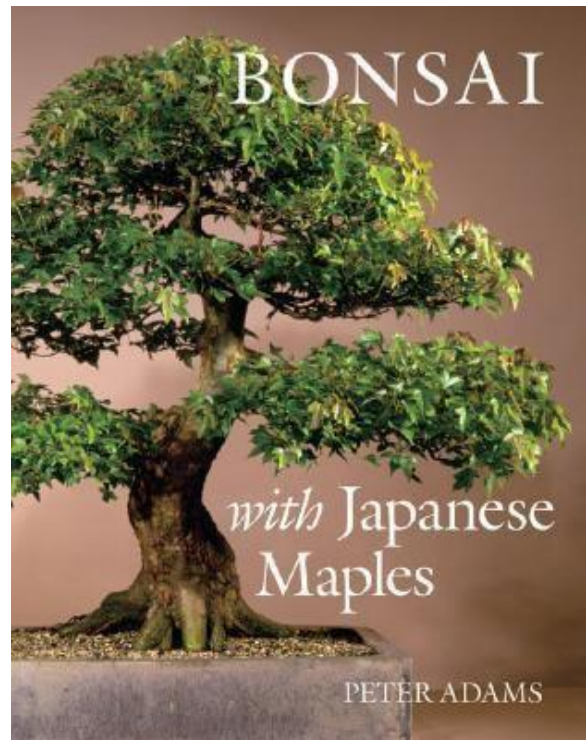
Several exceeding impressive Trident Maples were presented for Peter Adams to work on. Peter commented that the trees were underpriced for their worth and what an enthusiast is doing when purchasing an advanced tree is buying time.

The first subject had the original upper trunk removed leaving a large scar between the smaller right branch and the apical left branch.

If large wounds are left to dry and not treated rot will set in. There is a difference in the Japanese and European [Western] thinking on rotted trunks in maples and it is a regional difference due to climate. In Japan there are few rotted trunks and the Japanese have tended to prefer an immaculate trunk and therefore caution against cavities. In Europe and America there is more natural damage to these trees and the enthusiasts in these areas go for the hollow trunks and cavities. Westerners are far more likely to fly in the face of Japanese tradition and promote the look they are familiar with.

What you need to do with large scars is to score the flat surface making indentations that flow with the grain of the wood to imitate natural rotting. Don't score across the wound but downwards. Use different tools, bit sizes, to make the 'weathering' look natural and not manmade. This treatment can be the difference between 'oh my god' and something good.

When you are working on naturalizing stumps and stubs always go to the lowest point and ensure there is a path for water to drain off. Standing water will rot the timber and care needs to be taken to avoid hollows where water will pool. The centre of a tree is inert, merely 'stuffing' so you do no harm carving into the wood.



[Peter Adams' book on Japanese Maples is a well respected reference book in the international bonsai community](#)

When you have finished your carving use lamp black to darken the deadwood. If you use lime sulphur as a preservative then colour the wood once the lime sulphur has dried. Make sure your colouration has different tones as no wood is one colour and a solid black is not the point. Use solid black in the cavities and troughs to create shadows and visually increase the depth of the carving an lighter shades of gray on the higher points.

Teak oil can also be used as it gives a flat dull brown colour. The white of lime sulphur is a look you should avoid. With deciduous trees use lamp black or teak oil to make the deadwood dark and recessive, not white and 'in your face'.

Tridents have fleshy roots so the use of heavy soil in cold weather is creating a problem just waiting to explode. Seven parts grit to three parts light organic material will create a soil that will suit tridents as this mix will give aeration. If you squeeze a handful of soil and it falls apart when you release the pressure you have the right mix. If you fling it against a wall and it sticks you are in for trouble. That is 'death soil'.

When you are styling a trident you want the lines partially descending and then coming up. That is the way tridents grow – they do not grow with a strong downward slant as in an exaggerated "Japanese styling". Groups of branches are used together to thicken the foliage. As the tree matures and ramification increases branching is simplified every couple of years.

Tridents are very forgiving and you can do a lot with them that would cause a Japanese maple to die. With Japanese maples you can make big cuts in the autumn after the main growth has slowed and before the tree goes dormant. The Japanese maple can handle major work easier and working at this time does not weaken the tree.

Don't fall in love with what you are doing. It should be part of the piece. If your eye is attracted to a detail you have missed the point. You should see the tree in total and then note how well a styling feature suits but the styling feature should not hit you in the face.

Let the tree do the talking. Don't stick a recipe you saw somewhere else on the tree. Let the tree guide your styling and if you do this you won't have a carbon copy tree.

When loosening soil around the roots use your hands, not a chopstick. Fingers can feel and there is less chance of damage. You can also effectively use the handle ends of bonsai tools as they are strong enough to work with the soil but too thick to penetrate roots. Use your nose as a bonsai tool. Healthy trident roots smell a lot like bean sprouts. If this scent is 'off' there is too much moisture in the soil and that's trouble.

Cut small roots off the top of major roots. You want roots coming out the sides.

When you start to work on the tree's style be careful with your branch removal. When you remove superfluous branches you can start to see the structure of the tree and styling options become clearer.

If you are unsure of where you are going leave the branch until the direction is more certain. Try not to prejudice styling by removing branches you might need. Overall you are striving for a 5-6 cm increase in branch length per year.

Stumps and stubs should be cleaned up and made to look natural so they don't distract from the tree and their removal will clarify your styling. With scars from branch removals, if you chamfer them, making them a bit concave, the bark will roll in and grow over the wound. Long term character can be added with hollows created out of stubs and suitably blackened to look recessive. It depends on the look you want and what the tree is telling you.

Whatever you do make the branch structure and shaping sympathetic to the trunk style and you will get something fresh every time. Keep your styling appropriate to the species. If you respond to what the tree is offering and style branches accordingly you are on to a winner.

You can do all sorts of things to accelerate growth but you can't accelerate bark development.

JUNIPERS and other topics

Make sure each branch has its own sun and is not shaded by other branches. Junipers need full sun all day and semi sun in the hottest of the summer period. Branches that don't get enough sun due to their location on the tree will be weak and you might as well remove them straightaway because they will not grow properly.

Dry Pine roots – when pine roots dry out the tree encapsulates the roots in resin and that means they can't access water = dead tree = don't let your pines dry out.

Literati requires 'magnificent neglect'. Let the tree find itself. It should have an almost accidental, almost incidental appeal and the more you try the less chance you will achieve what you want.

FOLIAR FEEDING Spraying full strength fertilizer on the leaves of bonsai gets the food to the leaves and right where the tree needs it. If you have a tree with some weak branches you can help strengthen them specifically without over feeding the entire tree. This can bring good results to weak areas. Use full strength Miracle Grow. It is very effective as it is high in nitrogen and pushes the tree.

Feed the tree and let it grow. In reasonable temperatures you can spray and leave the tree in the sun but on really hot days the tree should be given shade if you foliar feed.

Date	Event	Details
20 August – 22 August 2011	Bonsai Society of Sydney Exhibition	Checkers Resort, 331 Mona Vale Road, Terrey Hills NSW. Special guest demonstrator Mr Hiroyoshi Miyaji, Vice-chairman, ASPAC Takamatsu 2011. www.bonsaisociety.org.au
27 August – 28 August 2011	Illawarra Bonsai Society Inc Annual Show	Sutherland District Trade Union Club, Cnr Kingsway & Manchester Roads, Gympie. \$5.00 admission, children under 12 free 10am to 4pm
15 October – 16 October 2011	Canberra Bonsai Society Show	Details to follow