



## NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

### Green Square Community Hall

3 Joynton Avenue Zetland

### 7pm Tuesday 12 Feb 2019

Focus on Figs – bring in figs for display bench, discussion and to work on.

### 7pm Tuesday 12 Mar 2019

Rod Donegan – horticulturist from Ausperl will talk on bonsai soils and nutrients

## CONTACT DETAILS



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## COMMITTEE

Patron	TBA
President	Bryan
Vice President	Neville
Secretary	David
Treasurer	Chris
Newsletter Editor	Roz
Librarian	Les
Committee	Frank, John & Ed

## MEMBERSHIP

Full Membership	\$40
Concession	\$25
Family	\$55
Pensioner	\$25

SCBC wishes to thank Sydney City Council for their continued support for our club by providing the hall at a reduced rate.

## February Meeting

- Focus on Figs – members to bring in figs (all styles) for display bench, discussion and to work on.
- Easter Show Stand discussion and update - Chris.
- National Arboretum Bonsai Week - nominate for chance at free masterclass and entry into Bonsai Acquisition Prize



*Banyan Fig in all its glory*

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## Special Guest Rod Donegan for March Meeting

Rod is a horticulturist from Ausperl. He will speak on bonsai soils and nutrients. Let Roz know if you want to purchase UXP, Natural Pumice or Rod's special native or exotic nutrient mix.

## Nominate yourself for National Arboretum Free Masterclass

At the February meeting, let Bryan know if you would like to be in the draw to go to the free National Arboretum Masterclass in Canberra. Two club members can be in the Arboretum lucky draw. John went last year.

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM SCBC CHRISTMAS MEETING

## Highlights from SCBC Styling Competition

Three junipers, three groups and only one hour to deliver initial styling initiated excitement, pressure, enthusiasm and lots of fun for our final SCBC meeting of the year. Here are some picture highlights.



*The Three Junipers*



*The main wire is on and now for the bending*



*With only one hour at hand Pete and company were straight into it.*



*5 minutes left and we just need to position these branches*



*All thoughts on deck to work out the styling possibilities*



*....and the winner is...*

*The three teams delivered a very close result – only one point between first and second. I think it was Pete's famous Christmas earrings and a never give up attitude that helped his team win.*

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# A SHORT ROMANCE – LEPTOSPERMUM

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## A Short Romance - *Leptospermum scoparium*

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Late summer last year I happened on some leptospermum in Flower Power and was really taken with the tiny leaves, tiny flowers, and the fact that flowers develop on the stems. Great leaf variation from tiny purple to longer silver. I was smitten and had never had leptospermum before.

Within a short while and with Flower Power sales I had 5 and was then given one. Unfortunately the joy didn't last long. Other enthusiasts might work with this species and all its variations most successfully but I have had nothing but hardship.

One plant, which was not robust when I got it, started to grow after a couple of months of inactivity and I was getting excited as its future style started to show. Then a branch died off, and another and another and another until the otto bin opened to receive the corpse.

Several turned up their toes quickly after gentle root pruning and I was left with 2. One has a lovely trunk, silvery leaves but refuses to shoot back on old wood. The trunk is mini size but the first leaves are 10 cm from the trunk. It is growing robustly despite being put in a small pot.. no root problems here. But I can't do anything with it if it doesn't shoot back.

The second and last has everything one wants, lovely curving trunk of decent size, tiny leaves, tiny flowers and it is in a training pot... and I think growing one leaf per month.



*Leptospermum scoparium* – late August 2018

Well, I lie... maybe two. It is so slow that it makes Buxus harlandii seem like a speed grower and few plants develop slower than a Buxus harlandii.



*Same Leptospermum scoparium* – January 2019

So I am disillusioned with leptospermum. It is a shame since they have so much to offer but unless you are young I don't see any hope of developing a nice bonsai without years of devotion.

I will work with this one and let it take its time to develop. I do see a nice shohin here. Root pruning will be done over a couple of years so I don't kill it by doing too much too soon but I am accepting the possibility that it could die any time it takes the fancy.

If you are successful with leptospermum good on ya... but it is not a tree that works with me.

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## Newzealandteatrees Blog

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'CJ' started on bonsai in 1978 in Singapore and later moved to Perth where he has become a specialist in *Leptospermum scoparium*.

*"My favourite bonsai material is the New Zealand Tea Tree, Leptospermum scoparium. This has the reputation as the "Ultimate Forbidden Bonsai." It is my speciality. My avatar is a Leptospermum scoparium as shown below.*



<http://www.ausbonsai.com.au/blog/cj/>

# OTHER LEPTOSPERMUM

## Other Leptospermums that make good bonsai

General nurseries stock the pretty pink and red flowered leptospermums with small leaves that often attract the eye of the bonsai enthusiast. These are mostly *Leptospermum scoparium* endemic to NSW, Tasmania, Victoria and NZ. Many have experienced difficulties in transforming these into bonsai. They really hate having their roots disturbed so can easily die when you put them in a bonsai pot.

This is probably why you do not see many *L. scoparium* on show in bonsai exhibitions. These plants can be grown as bonsai but you have to be prepared to lose a many on the journey even with careful root pruning and good after care.

I did try a couple of *L. scoparium* a few years back and was unsuccessful. There are a wide variety of other Leptospermum that can be more easily developed as bonsai:

### 1. *Leptospermum laevigatum* (Coastal Tea Tree).

*This Coastal Tea Tree has only had 9 months of work after acquisition from Tasmania in March 2018 found pot-bound, few leaves and a very straight trunk.*



I tried to loosen the soil and up-potted it immediately and began styling it as a "windswept". In October 2018, I decided to put it into a bonsai pot. However I have delayed working on the roots leaving them in a ball. It has responded well in terms of foliage development (February 2019). I will leave this now until next September before I start working on the roots.

### 2. *Leptospermum lanigerum* (Woolly Tea Tree)

I bought this *L. lanigerum* in May 2016. It is native to both Victoria and Tasmania, this particular tree form is only found in Tasmania; the other forms are bushy shrubs.



*L. lanigerum has gorgeous tiny pink-white flowers and tiny leaves. It needs a lot of water. It is fairly difficult to shape as it puts out longish stems with tiny leaves at all angles. It is still on a long slow journey. I left it for a year in a large training pot.*

In September 2017 I tried to put it into a bonsai pot. There were massively protruding roots curling all around the trunk which needed to be removed. However when I looked at the root system there didn't seem to be anything holding the roots together except these large protruding roots back and front. The front one was removed in Oct 2018. It is now February and the plant has survived and no branches died. So at the next repot next September, I am planning to remove the back protruding root.

### 3. Neville's *Leptospermum* spp



*Neville's Leptospermum before the restyling of the dead wood (above) and (left) after the dead wood bending. Neville keeps it in a water tray made from terracotta and will not repot until it is cooler in autumn.*



Neville picked up this *Leptospermum* some 6 months ago and has been significantly restyling this tree in several stages. A key technique in the restyling has been the bending of the deadwood. This is a specialised technique only for the experienced where you thoroughly soak the deadwood with wet towels and cover with foil. You then apply a blow torch to the area you want to bend making sure that you have fully protected all other parts of the tree in the process.

# PREPARING FOR SYDNEY RAS

## Preparing for the Sydney 2019 Royal Easter Show

As in previous years Sydney City Bonsai Club runs a display stand at the Royal Easter Show each year. The SCBC stand is organised by Chris who relies on our members to volunteer both their trees for the stand and their time to support the stand. Chris will detail what is required at the next meeting.

The Show opens on 13<sup>th</sup> April and closes on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. Our stand goes from Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April to Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April.

This year we want to encourage SCBC members to enter the RAS Bonsai competition. Chris and other Committee members are prepared to deliver competition bonsai on the set up night (Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April). However you have to enter the competition as an individual by registering as an exhibitor and following the prompts on the RAS website.

To see the schedule of classes etc. go to [www.rasnsw.com.au](http://www.rasnsw.com.au) then open "Competitions", then open "Flowers and Gardens", then you have the option of "Competition Schedule" or "Enter Now".

If you want to have a look at the Bonsai classes open "Competition Schedule" and go to Session 4. It lists all the Bonsai classes. If you want to enter, go back and hit the "Enter Now" box and follow the registry procedures. It costs \$35 to enter and this single charge covers many entries as you like. Entries close on the 13<sup>th</sup> March.

For your information I have copied the essential information from the "Competition Schedule":

The Sydney RAS Flower and Garden Bonsai Competition is on Thursday 18 April 2019.

<http://www.rasnsw.com.au/globalassets/document-library/rasnsw/competitions/flower-garden/2019-flower-garden-show-schedule-web-v4.pdf>

Delivery of Exhibits will be permitted from 10.30pm Wednesday 17 April until 7.45am Thursday 18 April. All Exhibits are to remain benched until Friday 19 April. Exhibit collection times are Friday 19 April from 9.00pm to Saturday 20 April prior to 7.45am. Vehicles will be permitted on site from 10.30pm to 8.00am only.

Weeds declared by City of Parramatta Council are prohibited from being used in any Exhibits at the Sydney Royal Flower & Garden Show. <http://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au>

[Note that Privet is considered a weed and cannot be entered.] Champions receive a ribbon. BONSAI ALL EXHIBITS MUST REMAIN ON EXHIBITION FOR FOUR DAYS No Exhibit may be entered in more than one Class. Accent plants will not be permitted to be displayed due to limited bench space.

PRIZE MONEY 1st \$25 each Class unless otherwise specified. Class prize money supported by Glenfield Wholesale Nursery Pty Ltd.

Class	
400	One Bonsai (one tree only), informal upright style, under 400mm.
401	One Bonsai (one tree only), cascade or semi-cascade style, under 400mm.
402	One Bonsai (one tree only), root over rock or clinging to rock, under 400mm.
403	Bonsai ficus, any style, under 400mm.
404	Bonsai, Australian Native (other than fig) any style, under 400mm.
405	Bonsai, any other style, under 400mm.
406	Bonsai, group planting (three or more trees), under 400mm.
407	Bonsai, sai-kei (landscape), under 400mm.
(S4070)	CHAMPION BONSAI- under 400mm (S4070SA)- Cash Prize supported by Bonsai Society of Australia Inc. Prize \$50
408	One Bonsai (one tree only), informal upright style, over 400mm.
409	One Bonsai (one tree only), cascade or semi-cascade style, over 400mm.
410	One Bonsai (one tree only) root over rock or clinging to rock, over 400mm.
411	Bonsai, ficus, any style, over 400mm.
412	Bonsai, Australian Native (other than fig), any style, over 400mm.
413	Bonsai, any other style, over 400mm.
414	Bonsai, group planting (three or more trees), over 400mm.
415	Bonsai, sai-kei (landscape), over 400mm.
(S4150)	(S4150)- CHAMPION BONSAI- over 400mm (S4150SA)- Cash Prize supported by Bonsai Society of Australia Inc. Prize \$50
(S4151)	CHAMPION AUSTRALIAN NATIVE BONSAI All first prize winning Native Bonsai Exhibits are eligible (S4151SA)- Cash Prize supported by Bonsai Society of Australia Inc. Prize \$50
(S4152)	SUPREME CHAMPION BONSAI (S4152SA)- RAS of NSW Award of Excellence Medallion for Supreme Champion Bonsai.
(S4152SB)	The Sue Brennan Annual Trophy supported by Sydney City Bonsai Club.

# LAZARUS & EVENTS CALENDAR

## Lazarus – Miracles Never Cease

BY LEE



*This 20 year old juniper is now a straggly bonsai, the tail having gone. But the last time I actually saw this juniper, probably 9 months ago, it was utterly and totally brown.*

The owner brought it to the theatre at Rockdale to show me and I declared it dead. He put it outside the stage door, forgot to take it home, and it was there a full unwatered week before he was back and reclaimed it. It was so 'dead' that no one bothered to steal it despite the fact it was two metres from the car park.

Once home it was watered and in due course – and most unexpectedly – put out green foliage. So 'dead' is not always dead.

The juniper has continued to recover and I suggested to the owner that I restyle it, telling him the change would be dramatic. I gave him three options, left, right or leave it as it was. With some trepidation [actually, a lot of trepidation] he gave me the nod and the right went in one cut. The thick branch was reshaped into a jin and still needs a bit more refinement with a Dremel. Some branches outside the proposed silhouette were removed, a back branch wired up for a new apex.

Finally the tree was repotted into a pot more suited to an informal upright now that its cascade branches had gone.

The owner is still somewhat shell shocked but kinda, maybe, sees the styling improvement. The photo has been taken a bit too close and there is another centimetre of the apex. The plan is for the apical area to thicken as will the lower left branching. Once more growth has been achieved another styling will be done just to rebalance it but it has great potential to be a really nice bonsai. The jins pointing strongly to the right balance the longer branch on the left and give the trunk age and gravitas. Almost invisible in the photo is the 'crane' branch on the upper left... that also strengthens the direction of the tree.

Originally this bonsai was very directionally confused but now it has been simplified and the lines strengthened. I'm not rapt in junipers but I would happily buy this from the owner. It will be about 20 cm, it's strength is the dynamic trunk and when the foliage develops it will be a striking shohin.



*The dynamic trunk will make this a striking shohin*

## Bonsai Events Calendar

Date	Event	Details
23-24 Feb 2019	Australian Native Plants as Bonsai Exhibition	Australian Botanical Gardens ACT <a href="http://www.cbs.org.au">www.cbs.org.au</a>
25-31 Mar 2019	The 4 <sup>th</sup> Annual Bonsai Week	National Arboretum, Canberra
18-23 Apr 2019	Sydney City Bonsai RAS Stand	Sydney Royal Easter Show, Sydney Showground
26-28 Apr 2019	Bonsai By The Beach	Wauchope Bonsai Club, Francis Retreat, 2 Thompson Place, Bonny Hills
17-20 May 2019	32 <sup>nd</sup> AABC Convention	Mantra Bell City, Melbourne. Hosted by Victorian Native Bonsai Club