



sydney city  
bonsai club inc.



## NEXT CLUB MEETING

**7pm Tuesday 13 June**

Green Square Community  
Church  
182 Victoria Street  
(cnr Collins St) Beaconsfield

## CONTACT DETAILS



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## COMMITTEE

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## Welcome to the June 2006 Newsletter

Firstly, we want to thank last month's special guest Dennis Barton. His demo on pines was very entertaining, highly informative and fantastic for those new to bonsai.

A big welcome to our new members Tony, Danny, Christian, Grahame!

Coming up in June is the first of Sue's 3 talks/demonstration covering all essential things you need to know about bonsai. Make sure you don't miss them!!

### Tue 13 June

*Brennan Trifecta: The Root of the Matter*

### Tue 11 July

*Brennan Trifecta: The Green Belt"*

### Tue 8 August

*Brennan Trifecta: Styling Matters*



Prize winning trees  
from the Royal  
Easter Show.  
Neville (left), Sue  
(bottom left) & Lee  
(bottom right).

Well done!!



### The DON'TS of WIRING :

DON'T wire sick or weak trees. DON'T wire a tree after it has been root pruned and potted. YOU MUST WIRE FIRST. DON'T cross wires over one another. This causes too much pressure at that point. DON'T twist sections in many directions because this will weaken or kill that section. Decide where the branch is to be placed before wiring.

### Why do we wire trees?

Wire is used to transform a potted plant into an acceptable bonsai form. Wiring allows the trunk and branches to be changed to the desired direction, position and shape. An aged look is created when branches are wired slightly lower than horizontal, as in an old tree in the wild (younger trees have upward growing branches). Pruning establishes the basic proportions while wiring highlights the features and refines the style to create the artist's design.

### When Should We Wire?

- **Spring:** 'loose' wiring is recommended due to the rapid growth of the tree (cambium flow is at its greatest) and the bark can easily be damaged.
- **Summer:** cambium flow is slower so wire can be a little tighter. Bark can still damage easily so care is needed.
- **Autumn:** Don't apply too tightly due to short spurt of growth.
- **Late Autumn/Winter:** Great time to wire deciduous trees due to bareness, making it easier to see and work on branches. Nevertheless, take care not to damage buds. Trees are dormant so branches will set quickly. The sap is flowing downwards so scarring of wood is less likely.

### How Long to Leave the Wire On?

This depends on the type of tree, thickness and age of the section, time of the year, how bushy and healthy it is and the size of the pot. It may take a couple of months or a couple of years. Keep an eye on the tree and REMOVE THE WIRE THE DAY BEFORE IT STARTS CUTTING IN THE BARK! If the plant springs back, or revert towards its original position over a few weeks when the wire has been removed, then rewire it. Put the new wire on between the original wire position or wire it the opposite way.

### How do I remove Wire Scars?

Put the tree in a slightly larger pot and let it grow vigorously for a while without trimming the affected parts. You can also lightly sand the raised section of

the bark. Allow to reform and lightly sand again. Repeat as necessary. If the wire marks are deep, it is more than likely they will be visible for all time.

### What are the different types of wire?

- **Copper:** commonly used in the past. It is flexible and stronger than aluminium so smaller gauges can be used effectively. It dulls with exposure to the atmosphere and is not as obvious as aluminium, which is important when you are exhibiting trees. Copper wire can be annealed (heated to make it pliable) and then bending and wrapping to the tree hardens it. Some trees, such as stone fruit, are allergic to copper wire.
- **Aluminium:** This bonsai wire is normally coated in a shade of brown to make it less obvious and it is more pliable and easier to apply than copper. However, it does not have the strength of copper so a heavier gauge has to be used. It is very suitable for smooth barked trees, like azaleas, that can be easily damaged while wiring.
- **Galvanised Iron:** This is cheap and has no adverse chemical reactions with trees but it is very difficult to apply the heavier gauges and is very obvious. It cannot be annealed.

### What Size and Length of Wire Do I Need?

You will need approximately 1/4 the thickness of the section to be wired. If this doesn't hold the branch in place, run a second wire of the same gauge parallel and as close as possible to the 1<sup>st</sup> wire. Remember not to cross the wire to avoid undue pressure on that part of the tree. Your gauge should be approximately 1/3 longer than the section to be wired.

### How do I start?

Basically from thick to thin... Trunk then thickest branch (bottom of the tree) up to the thinnest (top). Same rule applies for the sub-branches. The younger the section, the sooner it will set. Applying wire to the youngest sections last will make it easier to remove the wire without removing all the wire.

### HELPFUL HINTS...

Approach a branch with the wire in the direction you wish it to go. If you wish to bend it down, bring the wire down onto the branch. If twisting a branch, wire it in the direction you wish to twist it. Begin wiring from the back and from the most stable point (e.g. the trunk).

**Soil Conditions:** It is best to wire a tree when the soil is fairly dry but NOT bone dry! The cells of the plant will then be less turgid (full of water) so branches will be more flexible and less likely to snap (e.g. celery in the fridge). The same applies when removing wire.

## LESS HASTE - MORE SPEED

by Lee Wright

Bonsai enthusiasts are torn by twin desires – to have a tree develop into a well structured bonsai and to have a developing tree look more like a bonsai by getting it quickly into a bonsai pot.

Nature's cycles don't run at the speed of an enthusiast's ardour and too often a tree is put in a bonsai pot before it is ready. One definitely gets more inspiration and appreciation but development is slowed considerably.

This is not a trait limited to the eager novice who has not yet slowed to nature's seasons. As a novice into my 6<sup>th</sup> year, and with some trees I'm quite proud of, I have still moved too quickly on three of my trees, two bougainvillea and a lantana. This is understandable - at least to me. I found the perfect pot, both colour, shape and texture, for one boug and when it was flowering it was stunning while the flowers hid the lack of a proper structure. The tree would never have looked so well growing in pot. Now that the flowering is over and the summer growth has slowed to match the size of the pot, I rue this overeagerness but I don't want to disrupt the bougs by repotting at the wrong time and too soon. It is going to take far longer to form the structure I want on this tree now that it is in a small pot.

The lantana I wanted in a bigger pot but it is a reasonable size tree and I could not have managed the overall weight in a larger pot. Again, pot style and colour are perfect for the tree, but too soon, too soon. With this tree it is important to thicken the branches and develop the shape but I am beginning to think it is not going to happen unless I put it in a larger growing on pot. This is going to be a major decision in August and I think I will bow to the necessary development needs and forgo a nicer looking presentation for a year or two.

One alternative is to use a bonsai pot that is really too large just to give the tree more growing room. It can be benched at club meetings and the enthusiast gets the pleasure of a proper pot and more growth. But, as in the case of the lantana, I have no use for a bonsai pot that would be large enough to develop this tree... so patience must be cultivated as well.

I find that I go through regular cycles. One year I will pot a number of my trees into pots, preferring to think they have developed enough to warrant it. The next year I will put one or more of them back in larger pots or training pots for more development. I've been cultivating this habit since I started and I honestly don't think I'm alone in doing it. Even 6 years into this fascinating hobby has done little to dim my enthusiasm for an 'instant' bonsai. As long as I am willing to realise that while some trees can manage, the majority take longer and (as I am then prepared to pot for commonsense) it's not such a bad way. I do enjoy displaying my trees at club meetings and nigger at the training pot times when I can't display them. As long as the tree keeps developing, that's the crux of the matter.

So if you are keen to see the benefits of your training by potting in a bonsai pot, if the tree still needs a lot of necessary development put it in a pot too large so it gets the additional root space. We all need inspiration and if this helps you keep your bonsai hobby going forward... go for it. As the title suggests, less haste at the beginning means more speed in the development.

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Short note about our friends from the Nepean Bonsai Club... They presented their annual show in early May. Some very fine trees were on display. Congrats to them, it was well worth the trip to the Blue Mountains!



Slanting Cedar



Liquid Amber



Mame Bonsai Display

# EVENTS CALENDAR 2006

Date	Event	Details
2-4 June	Timber and Woodworking Show	Fox Studios, Moore Park
11 June	Workshops With A Difference	Conducted by the Bonsai Federation of Australia at Ray Nesci's Nursery in Dural. Cost: only \$15! Tutors: Elizabeth Simeonoff & Clinton Nesci. For more info call Ric on (02) 9953 1931 or <a href="#">download the registration form</a> .
1-2 July	Ideas Summit 2006	The summit will be held on Saturday and Sunday from 9am - 5pm at the Five Dock Citizen's Centre, 422 Lyons Rd, Five Dock. For more info call Ian on 0418 571 105.
9 July	Workshops With A Difference	See 11 June for details. Tutors: Brenda Parker & Noel Summerell.
21-23 July	The Tops Weekend	Illawara Bonsai Society's Live-in Weekend workshop at The Tops Conference Centre, in Stanwell Tops
August	Bonsai Federation of Australia Convention	Will be hosted in Ballarat with Hirotooshi Saito as principal demonstrator. The program is not yet finalised, but will include workshops on the Saturday and Sunday. More details will be made available later.
7-10 August	Central Coast Bonsai Society Show	Flora Festival at Mt Penang, Special demonstrations by Mr Kobayashi at the Gosford Flora Festival. More details yet to be announced
26-27 August	ABC Gardening Australia Expo,	Sydney Showgrounds, Sydney Olympic Park
16-17 Sept	Illawara Bonsai Society Annual Show	Stapleton Community Centre, StapletonSt, Sutherland
22-24 Sept	Bonsai Society of Australia Annual Show	Baulkham Hill Community Centre, Showground rd, Castle Hill, both retails and member's sale tables.
22-24 Sept	New Zealand 14 <sup>th</sup> National Bonsai Convention	Hosted in Auckland with key demonstrators Reiner Goebel, Robert Langholm, Mick Balzary, Mr Yang and Louis Buckingham. More information <a href="#">download the flyer</a> .
14-15 Oct	School of Bonsai Show	Ray Nesci Nursery, 26 Sagar Rd, Kenthurst/Dural
28-29 Oct	South Coast Bonsai Society Show	Figtree Community Hall, Figtree