

NURSERY CRAWL PHOTO GALLERY

Bonsai South Nursery is a beautiful nursery and Sue & Leon Kwong are kindly hosts. We were all made welcome and offered chilled water against the heat of the day – the hospitality and water were both much appreciated.



↑ Bonsai South Nursery main display area



↑ Leon Kwong chatting to Sue & Philip – Leon's new book: 'Ficus Bonsai in the Temperate Climate' is on the bench



↑ Magnificent *Ficus* bonsai on display

← Browsing the stock



← Alex & John sorting through stock plants

Lee to Neville →

"Give me a minute; I am sure I can think of a reason why you have to have another maple bonsai!"



MUDLARK POTTERY

MUDLARK POTTERY A new potter with a touch for natives

Penny Davis of Mudlark Pottery has been doing bonsai and potting about the same amount of time. She started 30 years ago working blind with bonsai, trying to learn it from magazines and books. The art appealed to her and she gave it a go but it was years before she found other enthusiasts at the Newcastle Bonsai Club. Penny is skilled in a wide range of crafts: candle making, basketry, woodwork, hand and machine sewing, weaving, dyeing, papermaking, paper-mache, knitting, crocheting, gardening and animal husbandry, and adding two more skills was easily done.



Three oval pots

Penny got her ceramics trade certificate in 1990 and started potting professionally. Her evolving range of ceramics have featured and taken prizes at art and craft shows throughout NSW metropolitan and regional galleries and exhibitions. As well, her gift and homewares are represented in select shops and she has been commissioned to design and make dinnerware for several restaurants.



Four styles of Mudlark pots

In between all this Penny tuned into the needs of bonsai and started creating bonsai pots for her trees. Her expertise in this field is taking hold and she is producing quality pots. For enthusiasts who are keen on Aussie natives, many of her pots are splendid, combining the quality needed to enhance a good tree with a refined naturalness that suits our natives.



Free form lichen pot

Penny is one of the few potters using a copper glaze that produces a rich blue tinged red glaze. The glaze is a colloidal colour that is hard to handle because it depends how the light hits it and refracts so it has to be applied thickly to get the depth of colour needed. Then it can run off the pot and the bottom needs to be scraped. But a well glazed red pot is well worth the trouble – to the user at least.



Red glazed pot

Penny has perfected a 'lichen glaze'. The glaze took 18 months to develop and has a cracked surface effect as though bits of clay are going to flake off the pot. Spots of green colour mimic dried lichen and the total effect is beautiful and, again, compliments Australian native plants.

Penny develops many of her own glazes and this is reflected in the colour range of her pots; subtle aubergine to black, mottled blue/greens, sand to earth. The glazes can be flat, semi sheen or full gloss and have a subtlety that is perfect for our plants in a way oriental pots can seldom achieve.

Penny tends towards simplistic pot styles, ovals with straight sides - low or high, freeform, rounds and squared rounds. The effect that suits natives is the starkness and the finish... her pot becomes the ideal foil for the tree.

MUDLARK POTTERY

Penny is trying to establish several popular sizes and shapes and rationalise her selection. Local enthusiasts can contact her at Mudlark Pottery to arrange a visit or see her pots at Newcastle club meetings. Sydneysiders can take a run to Ray Nesci Bonsai Nursery in Kenthurst to see a small selection.



Mixed range of Lichen Pots

At this stage of her developing bonsai pottery career, Penny will do special orders for particular pot sizes and and/or finishes.



Blue glazed pot showing tie holes

A For this it would be best to take a run up to Toronto with the plant to ensure the best outcome.



Deep glazed pot

As to the origin of her business name; from Penny herself: "I tried to think of a name for my work that was catchy without being too wayout (arty-farty was one I liked). I wanted to have something to do with clay in the title and also wanted to convey that it was a fun or enjoyable business. I try not to take myself or other things too seriously. I know a fair bit about animals and birds etc, so Mudlark (pee-wee just wasn't quite right) seemed to be the obvious choice."

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REMEMBER BRING A TREE TO EVERY MEETING

Date	Event	Details
20 th March – 2 nd April	Easter Show - Sydney Royal Flower & Garden Show (Bonsai, Wednesday 26 th & Thursday 27 th of March)	Sydney Show Ground, Sydney Olympic Park.
16-19 May	'Simply Bonsai' AABC 21 st National Bonsai Seminar	Adelaide SA. www.bonsaisa.org.au or ask Lee Wright for registration forms and information.
1-3 August	Tops Weekend Workshop,	Stanwell Tops. See Lee Wright for details
9-10 August	Illawarra Bonsai Society Annual Show	Box Road Gynea