



NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

Green Square Community Hall
3 Joynton Avenue Zetland

7pm Tuesday 9 May 2017
Bonsai Training talk by Lee

7pm Tuesday 13 June 2017
Short talk on AABC National conference and Bonsai by the Harbour by Roz

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COMMITTEE

Patron	Dorothy Koreshoff
President	Bryan
Vice President	Sue
Secretary	TBA
Treasurer	Chris
Newsletter Editor	Roz
Librarian	Les
Committee	Lee & Frank

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.

May Meeting

- Bonsai training talk by Lee:- includes controlled growing of branches, sacrifice branches and major styling changes.
- Chris will provide feedback on SCBC Bonsai Stand at the Royal Easter Show
- Members styling hotspot and work on your trees.



Engaging the public at Sydney City Bonsai Stand, 2017 Royal Easter Show

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Illawarra Bonsai Exhibition 6-7 May 2017

Illawarra Bonsai Exhibition is on this weekend 10 am to 4.30 pm Saturday-Sunday May 6 and 7. There will be a magnificent display of exotic and Australian Native trees; sales of bonsai stock, pots and accessories at very reasonable prices; raffles, a bonsai clinic where you can bring your plants for expert advice; and, a Mothers day bonsai making for children (\$10 -everything provided).

Sutherland District Trade Union Club Cnr Kingsway and Manchester Road, Gymea. Admission \$5 (includes raffle entry). Free for children under 12 when accompanied by adult.

BASIC STYLING FOR BEGINNERS

Basic Bonsai Styling for Beginners

BY SUE

This is the third article in our series of Bonsai for Beginners.

There are a number of things that turn a tree in a pot into a true bonsai and they are covered by one word: "artistry".



This tree demonstrates bonsai artistry

Some people have a natural flair for balance and style while others can't sense this aspect. Bonsai beginners particularly stress out at the thought of trying to style a young tree. Beginners take note, there are a series of guidelines for styling trees which can help make your hobby a lot more interesting. You will find that your trees take on a more stylistic appearance when you consult the guidelines for help.

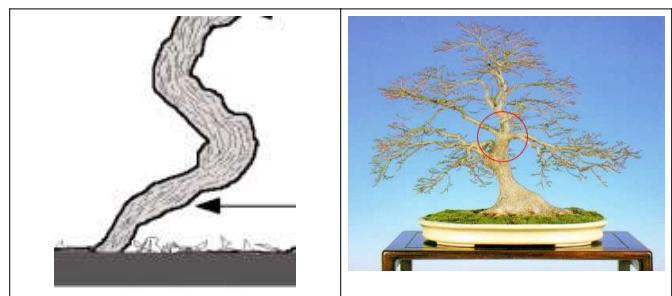
Be aware that most bonsai trees have some sort of styling fault. Nothing is perfect. It is the ability of the bonsai artist to work with faults that make the tree appear balanced and artistic that creates true beauty in bonsai. A bonsai is never finished. Because a bonsai is continually growing, it is always changing. The longer you have a bonsai the better it will look because your knowledge will also grow.

A bonsai tree must be in balance. Just think of the leaning tower of Pisa, if a bonsai is not correctly in balance it looks uncomfortable in the pot. A badly balanced bonsai sometimes looks as if it is about to fall out of the pot.

A good bonsai must appear to be perfectly balanced with the placement of the foliage providing the visual weights and counterbalances to balance the angle of the trunk. No matter what angle, height or shape of the trunk, it is the job of the foliage to visually balance the tree.

Guidelines for styling trees:

1. **Avoid bar branches.** Bar branches are branches that grow horizontally from the trunk and form a cross (+). Bar branches are harsh and too symmetrical for a tree, and if encouraged, can sometimes cause reverse taper to grow in the trunk at branch junctions.
2. **Avoid reverse taper.** The trunk of a tree should always be wider at the base and taper to thin at the top.



Avoid Reverse Taper (left)) and Bar Branching (right)

3. **The front (viewing angle) of a bonsai bows slightly forward and should greet the viewer.**
4. **No forward growing branches on the bottom half of the tree.**
5. **Side branches** should grow from the outside of the bend or curve not the inside.



Not only the retention of the branch on the inner curve looks out of place, it has created bar branching and reverse taper.

BASIC STYLING FOR BEGINNERS *CONTINUED*

6. The back branch should not be the lowest branch.
7. Air spaces visible between the branches are important. They help to give the bonsai the appearance of age. Without airspaces showing, a bonsai becomes a blob of foliage on a stick – well sort of.



Top two images show trees with “blobs” of green as a canopy whilst bottom two images show impact of air spaces on quality of the bonsai.

8. **Balance.** I can't stress enough the importance of a correctly balanced bonsai tree. If a tree growing in the ground has an accident during a storm and ends up at a different angle it will over time, encourage branches and foliage to grow in areas to produce a counterbalance so the tree won't fall further. This takes the tree many years. However, it indicates that the tree is not comfortable with being out of balance.
9. **Avoid cross over branches.** They are visually confusing and distract the eye from the direction of the bonsai. If you find a tree that has many points outside the guidelines with no alternatives – **don't panic!**

There is a saying in bonsai that saves the day, '**it does not matter where the branches are, its where the foliage shows.**' The first thing we want to show in a bonsai is the appearance of

age. The best way to get this dimension is to buy a stock plant with a thick trunk. If it is a variety that holds meristems (potential shoots) all the better. It means that it can be cut severely to reduce height and will easily shoot from old wood.

Look for a trunk with a nice spread of roots and maybe a twist or bend in the trunk, it will make a more interesting bonsai than a dead straight trunk. Don't bother to grow from seed at the beginning. It is very slow and takes several years before you have anything vaguely resembling what you imagine is a beautiful bonsai.

Bonsai come in five basic styles

1. Formal upright. This style has a very straight trunk and reminds me of the Norfolk Island pines seen in Sydney.
2. Informal upright. The easiest style for beginners to play with. Most trees fit this category.
3. Slanting. The important feature that identifies this style is the trunk slant at 45 degrees.
4. Semi-cascade. The foliage ends above the pot bottom.
5. Full cascade. The foliage extends below the pot bottom.

Before you cut your stock plant look closely and see which one of the 5 basic styles the tree best suits. Let the tree tell you. The easiest style for beginners is the 'informal upright'.

Within all bonsai styles the same basic styling guidelines are followed.

Beginners get all in a muddle when bonsai regulars start to quote Latin names for trees, disregarding common garden names. No, bonsai regulars are not showing off their knowledge, they are merely clearly identifying any one of around 10,000 varieties of trees growing on planet earth.

Just like buying a motor car, you need to know not only the make (Toyota) but also the model name (Corolla, Camry, Lite Ace, Town Ace, Cressida etc.), to get exactly what you want.

Keep the styling guidelines handy when you attack a tree. Happy bonsaiing!

2017 SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW

Report on Sydney Royal Easter Show

BY CHRIS

Once again, our club organised the bonsai stand at the Sydney Royal Easter Show. Over the eight days volunteers from three clubs gave up their valuable time to both show and answer general queries about bonsai. An array of good quality bonsai plants were provided by two clubs in order to showcase the stand and draw in the public. I would like to thank you all for making the stand successful.



The stand was often quite busy and fun for our volunteers

In fact the stand was quite busy most of the time as many people stopped to chat and ask about growing bonsai some up to ten minutes. Volunteers at the stand were very satisfied that people were genuinely interested.

Of course we had the standard comments - "I had a bonsai but I killed it"; "oh really- bonsai should be grown outside?"; "what can you do to revive a dead bonsai?" and of course "how do you keep them small?"



The smile says it all. This little girl was so interested in following how you develop bonsai that we gave her a stock fig to take home and grow.

One of the most useful demonstrations we had on the stand was a progression of Port Jackson figs – seed, one year, 5 years, 20 years and 40 years. We gave out some fig seedlings to some who were very interested and watched them leave with their new treasure. Once

again, thank you to all who volunteered and/or supported this year's SCBC Easter Show stand.

RAS Bonsai Competition

The Easter Show Bonsai competition was a little short on bonsai entry numbers this year. I do know that it is a little awkward to get your trees in and out of the show-grounds late in the evening but the experience of entering a competition is worthwhile. This year, Sue won eleven prizes out of the 14 bonsai that she entered. Here are a few pictures from the competition:



Left: Sue wins the under 400mm champion category.



Below: Ms Martin wins the over 400mm champion category.



Sue's winning Japanese Maple.

EXTREME BENDING OF NATIVE TEA TREE

Tony Tickle - Extreme Bending of Native Tea Tree

You can always learn something new in bonsai. At Bonsai Week Canberra 2017, top expert from the UK, Tony Tickle applied his extensive knowledge of styling bonsai to a native Tea Tree (*Leptospermum trinervium*).

This species is characterised by a stout trunk with papery bark when it is older and pendulous branches. When the leaves are crushed they give off a eucalyptus smell. It flowers in large clusters of white from August to November.



Despite challenging starting material, UK bonsai expert, Tony Tickle demonstrated how redefine this tree by bringing the foliage back on itself and integrating the ugly straight stump into the existing deadwood,

Trunk sections of Australian natives are generally very hard to bend and it was fascinating to learn how Tony adapted a technique often used to do heavy bending on Junipers, which have much more flexible trunks, to this Australian native.

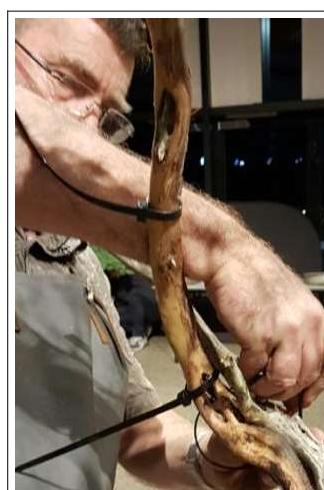
Leptospermum trinervium (Paperbark tea-tree) is common in the Sydney region and grows in damp scrubby woodlands as an under story. When the leaves are crushed it gives off a strong eucalyptus smell. They often grow for many years. The demonstration material used by Tony was estimated to be about 100 years old. Looking at the tree initially, and being 1.8 metres in height, it was obvious that this tree would be a styling challenge. So how can you bring the foliage down to sit much closer to the base?

First Tony removed the strong straight stump that had been cut off during collection. He then worked on it in order to incorporate it into the existing deadwood at the base of the tree. Tony explained that the only branch left on this tree is fed by a single lifeline which will be shown up as a contrast to the deadwood by taking off all the flaky bark. Next Tony wired all of the branches in the foliage mass. He explained that this was important because he did not want to put the tree under further stress when he actually undertook the big bend in the trunk.



Here Tony is carefully carving out a section of the remaining live trunk in order to insert strong wires to support the extreme bending process.

Next Tony used carving tools to hollow out a channel in a section of the slender trunk. Then five strong (3mm diameter) copper wire strands were inserted into the channel and the whole lot was wrapped in raffia.



First, ties for the inside wires and then raffia to protect the trunk in the bending process.

COMPLACENCY & EVENTS CALENDAR

Extreme Bending *continued*

Now the test! Very cautiously, the trunk was bent relying on the copper wire to prevent the carved section from collapsing on itself, and thus breaking.



Note the anchoring tie wires to help hold the new style in place.

This process is not for the faint-hearted! Tony explained that this process is often used for bending heavy sections of Junipers. Time will only tell if this technique will work for this old Aussie native.

Source of story & pictures: Victorian Native Bonsai Club – a club worth joining if you are interested in Australian native bonsai and they accept interstate membership.

Complacency

It has never happened before so a natural guard is relaxed. And tragedy strikes. After exhibiting over a hundred trees in Royal Shows from 2003 to 2017 with no problems, Sue exhibited an exquisite miniature saotome azalea on a two tiered stand with a miniature oriental jar as accent and the entire display was stolen.... tree, stand, accent feature. Gone.

In the past we have always erred on the side of caution and not entered easily concealed bonsai but this setting was so superb it was easy to over ride caution. The loss is devastating. The tree was in a pot that would fit on your finger, the tree artistically styled and healthy, the stand specially chosen and purchased for this display. Gone.



Sue's stolen saotome azalea

It is important to always keep in mind when displaying trees, whether in a club show or an event like the Royal, security is insufficient to protect **very small items** and it is better to keep them at home.

Bonsai Events Calendar

Date	Event	Details
6-7 May 2017	Illawarra Bonsai Society Bonsai Exhibition	Sutherland District Trade Union Club (Tradies) cnr Kingsway and Manchester Road, Gymea
19-22 May 2017	30 th Annual AABC Convention "Bonsai- Art by Nature"	Royal on the Park, Brisbane
10-11 Jun 2017	Bonsai by the Harbour-Bonsai Federation of Australia Northern	Sydney Church of England Grammar School's Rowing Facility, 86 Wharf Road, Gladesville
17 Jun 2017	School of Bonsai "Ideas Summit" with Koji Hiramatsu	Don Moore Centre, cnr North Rocks Rd & Farnell St, Carlingford
23-25 Jun 2017	Bonsai by the Beach, Gold Coast Tweed Bonsai Club	2 Thompson Place (off Ocean Drive), Bonny Hills
25-27 Aug 2017	18 th Annual Tops Bonsai Weekend,	Acacia, Stanwell Tops Function Centre, Stanwell Tops