



NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

Green Square Community Hall

3 Joynton Avenue Zetland

7pm Tuesday 8 May 2018

Lee will talk on selecting appropriate pots for trees.

7pm Tuesday 12 June 2018

TBA.

CONTACT DETAILS



0432 461 025



info@sydneycitybonsai.org.au



<http://sydneycitybonsai.org.au>



PO Box 486
Summerhill NSW 2130

COMMITTEE

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

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

- Lee will talk on selecting appropriate pots for trees.
- Member styling hotspot-includes sharing your experience with trees that you bring in for the show table.



The Fresh Water Paperbark (Melaleuca raphiophylla) shown here was styled by Derek Oakley from Western Australia. It is 50 years old and has been styled since 1995. A truly magnificent Australian Native bonsai donated to the National Arboretum in Canberra.

In this Issue:

- Native Night at SCBC – page 2 & 3
- Styling Natives from Stock– page 4
- A very Special Red Pine– page 5
- Roller Coaster Banksia– page 6
- Bonsai Events Calendar – page 6

Reminders

Changed Car Access to Greensquare Community Hall

Car access to the Community Hall via Joynton is no longer available so you need to enter from the back at Portman Street. Please view the map attached with this month's email.

Lots of Bonsai Events in May and June

Make the most of learning about bonsai by attending some of the bonsai events. For example don't miss the Illawarra Bonsai Annual Show nor Bonsai By the Harbour this year. I have detailed 5 events in the email attachments.

NATIVE NIGHT AT SCBC

Native Night at SCBC

Natives were the focus at the April SCBC meeting. A good selection of natives and stories was provided via the display bench.

Water Gum (*Tristania laurina*)

As the common name suggests this tree lives near riverbeds on the Eastern Coast of Australia. Its roots are hungry for water. The bonsai shown below is kept in a special custom made bonsai pot with the drainage holes on the side of the pot so there is a constant reservoir of water at the base of the plant.



Water Gum (Tristania laurina)

What is also interesting about this plant is that there is a thread graft using one of the tree's own branches in order to develop a "missing branch" on the left side of the plant.



Thread graft – branch tip is threaded back through hole in trunk to establish a missing branch

Thread grafts are easy to do and have a high success rate as long as you do not damage the buds as you push the tip through the trunk. This is the second go at doing a thread graft for this plant and a slightly larger hole was drilled this time coupled with wrapping a layer of glad wrap over the buds before pushing the tip through the hole. So far so good for this graft.

Lemon Scented Gum (*Eucalyptus citriodora*)

Growing gum trees as bonsai is often a challenge. It is hard to balance getting a relatively thick trunk and getting some shape into the trees as the foliage tends to grow at the top and lower branches can die back after pruning or wiring.

The little set of lemon scented gums below is now three years old and the bottoms of the trunks are finally beginning to thicken. The trees have started as little seedlings and potted early. Rather than letting the shoots extend throughout each growth spurt, I have looked for evidence of new buds in the leaf axils and pruned back leaving enough residual stem above the leaf axil to manage a small amount of dieback.



Lemon Scented Gum (Eucalyptus citriodora)

After two seasons in late summer I cut off the top of each plant to try to manage the height. New shoots did regrow as this was the main thoroughfare from the roots to the top of the plant. I did try to heavily cut back a side branch – but this branch died back. At this stage I have not done much wiring but when I do, I will ensure that all tips of the branches will remain pointing upwards.

NATIVE NIGHT AS SCBC *CONTINUED*



This gum is now four years old.

Using the method described above, this gum is now four years old. Still in a training pot, it will be gently wired to fix cross over branch and then put in its bonsai pot early next summer.

Callistemon

Callistemons are a popular bonsai choice and relatively easy to grow. The callistemon below has a very interesting trunk line. Callistemon's like lots of water.



Callistemon with great trunk curves

Callistemon's are apical dominant and so you will need to work on the trunk taper. However if you keep pruning all the time, you will not get flowers as the flowers only grow on new wood. You will need to compromise a little – give it a hard prune after flowering and then let the new growth grow unchecked so you can get the flowers.



Callistemon in training



Sue's Callistemon in flower

Native Soil Mix

This is the mix Marcela from the Victorian Native Bonsai uses for all her natives. It is a very light and airy mix and since I have started to use it, I have not lost any plants.

By parts:

2 parts diatomite (available from Enfield Produce)

1 part small pine nuggets (available from Enfield Produce)

¾ part cocopeat (I just use Brunnings choir peat from Bunnings)

½ part perlite (available at Bunnings)

Natives at the Arboretum

A visit to the National Arboretum is worth the trip to Canberra. Below are a couple of my favourite native bonsai, the Angophora (a gum) styled by Ted Poynton since 1979 and the Melaleuca group styled by Alf Devine in 2003.



Smooth bark apple (Angophora costata) over 50 years old



Fresh water paperbark (Melaleuca raphiophylla)

STYLING NATIVES FROM STOCK

Styling Natives from Nursery Stock

Styling natives from stock plants is a lot of fun and you can get relatively good results within a couple of years. Melaleuca's and leptospermum are really good species to work with as they generally have small leaves, lots of flowers and grow rapidly.

Lepstospermum

Lee recently purchased a couple of leptospermum from a local nursery. The pictures below are the before and after shots for the initial styling.



Before and after for two nursery Leptospermum

She picked the line of the trunks of both plants to create interesting movement and taper. She then picked the main branches generally applying bonsai aesthetics. Don't be afraid to remove large branches if they are in the wrong place.

Lee chopped the oversized root in the second plant but left the other one until the next repotting. She was tentative about upsetting the roots too much at this Autumn time of the year.

If repotting natives in late Autumn, I would use a serrated knife to cut across the bottom 20% of the root and if it was extremely rootbound, I would cut a few wedges around the plant so new soil can be added until next Spring.

Melaleuca

Below is an example of taking a *Melaleuca styphelioides* from stock to bonsai. I purchased this plant from Bonsai World in April 2017.



The the very low bend in the trunk of this melaleuca is typical of stock from bonsai nurseries. Normal nurseries often stake their stock so that there are no bends.

I chopped off the bottom third of roots and put it in new soil and an orchid training pot. In September 2017, when I could see some new buds developing, I chopped off 75% of the plant (both at the top and pruned away unwanted branches and shortened the remaining branches). Next I wired some curves into the branches.

In December, 2017 when I was sure the plant was healthy and growing, I potted it into a bonsai pot.



Melaleuca one year after purchase as stock.

I always repot using Seasol and leave out of direct sun for a couple of weeks when I repot. This is the tree April 2018 only one year after purchase. In the next repot I will change the pot. It will be shallower and a larger oval.

A VERY SPECIAL RED PINE

A Very Special Red Pine

Historically our present club had its roots from Dorothy and Vitor Koreshoff some 20 years ago. Dorothy became the first Sydney City Bonsai Club's patron. One of the Koreshoff original trees turned up at the National Arboretum's special workshop for bonsai clubs recently. This Japanese red pine was grown from seed in 1951 by Vitor Koreshoff.

Andrew Edge, the current owner, from the Bonsai Society of Central Coast and from Bonsai World, received a workshop place on the Thursday of Bonsai Week at the Arboretum in Canberra. The work on the tree was done under the guidance of Carlos van der Vaart from Holland.

"My first workshop was held in the morning with Carlos. We worked on an old Koreshoff Japanese red pine. The tree has been a bonsai its whole life and has many beautiful features. It had been potted into the training pot and allowed to grow to build strength for this operation and the results were spectacular. The roots are very healthy so I'm looking to repot in Spring into a bonsai pot again. I look forward to the continued development of this tree." - Andrew Edge

Here are some highlights during the this majestic old bonsai's transformation by Carlos and Andrew.



After cleaning up the tree, Andrew extensively wired and put lots of raffia on the intended branch to be bent.



Everyone held their breath as Carlos bent the branch towards its intended position



Before the workshop Andrew put the pine in a training pot to maximise its health.



You have got to be brave to cut this much of old growth from such a special tree!



Wow! Look at the tree now! Two very proud bonsai artists Carlos and Andrew.

ROLLER COASTER BANSKIA & EVENTS CALENDAR

A Roller Coaster Ride for this Banskia

I purchased this Banskia 'Rollercoaster' (a cultivar of *Banksia integrifolia*) from Rockdale Community Nursery in April 2016. I loved the initial curve low down in the trunk. However, when examining the branches, there was never going to be an "apex" to balance the cascade.



Banskia 'Roller Coaster' -April 2016



No matter which way I turned it, I could not make an apex

So I wondered if I could completely change the angle of the tree and make it an informal upright. As a first step, I got rid of most of the cascade and used the serrated knife to cut the new angle for the roots. I repotted this at the new angle into a training pot and heavily wired a new apex upwards. Stage. 18 months on when it was up into a bonsai pot it was beginning to take shape.



Initially (left) it was potted at the wrong angle. A couple of months later I corrected it (right).

The pruning issue with making a Banskia Roller Coaster as an upright, is regularly pruning all the downward shoots. If you do not do this, the tree very quickly gets out of hand.



Banskia 'Roller Coaster' in May 2018

Bonsai Events Calendar

Date	Event	Details
30-5 May 2018	Bonsai Generations of Growth,	Japan Foundation, Level 4 Central Park Broadway
5-6 May 2018	Illawarra Bonsai Society Annual Show (Autumn)	Sutherland District Trade Union Club (Tradies) Kingsway Gynea
19 May 2018	Bonsai Study Group Exhibition	10am-4pm West Pymble Community Hall, Lofberg Rd
9-10 June 2018	"Bonsai by the Harbour"	C of E Grammar School Rowing facility Wharf Rd. Gladesville.
20-23 July 2018	31 st Australian National Bonsai Convention – Bonsai Exposed	Mantra Bell City, Melbourne. http://www.abcltd.org/next-convention/