



NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

Green Square Community Church
182 Victoria Street
(Cnr Collins Street) Beaconsfield

7pm Tuesday 11 November 2008
Natives, Junipers & Figs

7pm Tuesday 14 October 2008
Christmas Party

CONTACT DETAILS

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COMMITTEE

Patron Dorothy Koreshoff

President Neville

Vice President Sue

Secretary Lee

Treasurer Rebecca

Public Officer Max

Newsletter Editor Tony

Librarian Philip

Committee Philip, Gary, Tani,
Jennie, Damian

MEMBERSHIP

Full Membership \$30.00

Concession \$20.00

Family \$45.00

Pensioner \$15.00

Welcome to the November Newsletter

November Meeting:

This is the last workshop for this year Figs can still be pruned, wired and repotted this month. Bring along soil and a range of pots if you plan to repot your tree.

Natives, Azaleas & Junipers can also be worked on this month



John Naka and his famous bonsai – Goshin

See John Naka – Bonsai Master article page 5

- To see Members Trees in Training on show at the October meeting see page 2
 - Sue demonstrates training of a young Fig on page 3
- See pictures of the trees on display at the School of Bonsai Show – page 4
- Read the review of John Naka's famous book 'Bonsai Techniques 1' on page 6
 - Events calendar page 6

TREES IN TRAINING ON SHOW AT THE OCTOBER MEETING



Glen received this tree as a legacy from Amanda when she passed away.



A close up of the aerial roots on Glen's tree



Lee's literati Callistemon bonsai

There is no such thing as an instant bonsai but you can find 'almost instant' bonsai stock plants. This callistemon was purchased from Riverview Nursery for \$10 in May 2008, repotted into coarse gravelly soil in a Mirkwood freeform pot and left to lick its wounds for six weeks until the new roots stabilised the tree.

It should have been four weeks but two weeks after the initial potting I decided the position was wrong and removed and repositioned it, thereby increasing the tree's trauma.

It was then obvious the tree was developing flower buds so only preliminary styling work has been done. Once the flowers are finished the foliage will be cut back heavily and more wiring and shaping will establish a better look to this native literati. But for \$10 – WOW!!!



Sue's Baeckea bonsai won best native at the Royal Easter Show



Lee's European Olive bonsai

SUE'S FICUS PRUNING DEMONSTRATION



Sue told us that the worst thing you can do with a ficus is to let its branches continue to grow without pruning – without pruning the branches keep extending and lose the leaves on the lower part of the branch



This is the sort of regrowth you can expect from a ficus when it is pruned at the right time of the year – with this much regrowth the best branches in the best positions can be selected to continue the development of the tree.



Before pruning Sue wired the branches into position



All branches were trimmed back



Sue's message: Use wound sealants to encourage vigorous callous development → hence vigorous healing

This photo shows the thick roll of callous tissue that developed when this cut was treated with Japanese made wound sealant

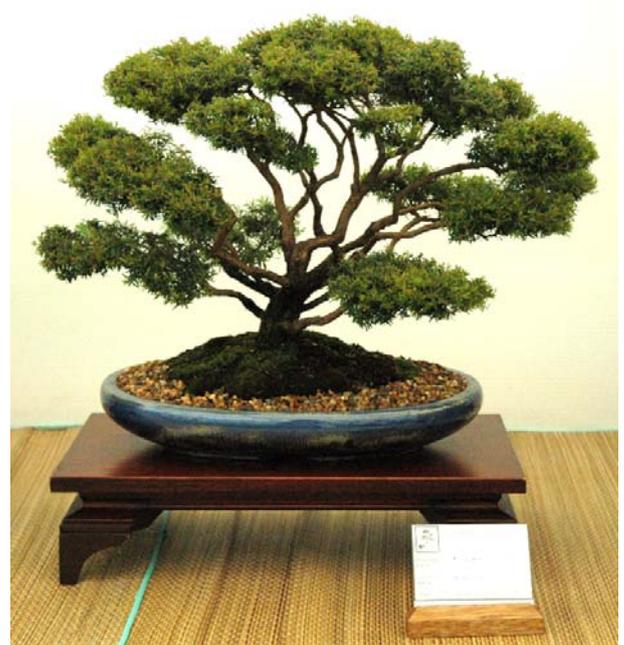
This photo shows the very thin roll of callous tissue that developed when this cut was not treated with a wound sealant of any kind



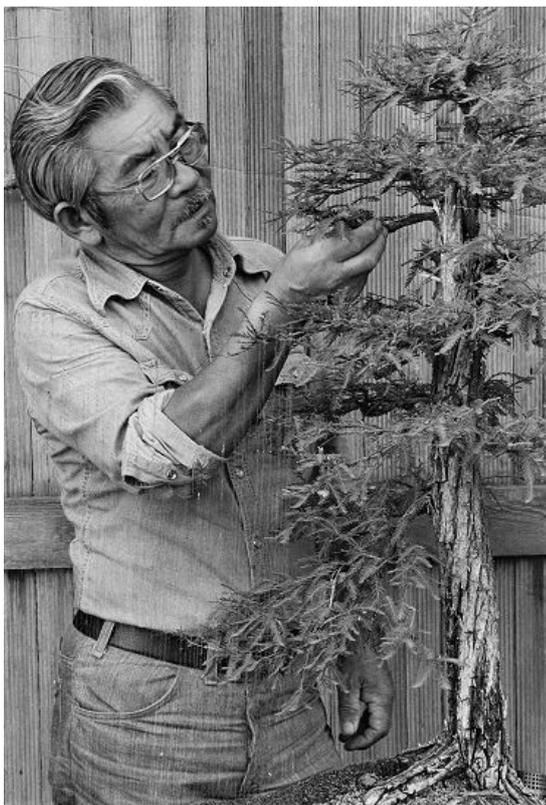
"If you can't find the front, instead find the back and then rotate it 180 degrees."

John Y. Naka

SCHOOL OF BONSAI SHOW PICTURES



JOHN NAKA – a brief biography of a bonsai master



John working on his Montezuma in the late 1950s

Born on August 16, 1914 in the farming community of [Ft.] Lupton, Colorado (northeast of Denver), John Yoshio Naka was the third child of Kakichi and Yukino Naka.

In November, 1922, when he was eight, John's family moved to Japan. His father, an only son, went back to the ancestral home in Kurume on Kyushu island to care for his elderly father, Sadehei.

John and his grandfather (Sadehei-san) formed a close relationship -- Sadehei-san taught him bonsai as well as a repertoire of Japanese proverbs.

Being just a boy, John initially could only watch the old man trim and shape the trees. Then he was only allowed to do such things as watering and pulling weeds until he was older. John grew very close to his grandfather, and through him learned to train and love bonsai. Sadahei passed away in 1926 while John was in the fifth grade.

John was a top student, and studied many subjects, later he studied landscape design. It was then that he learned the basics of the relationship of trees, stones and space.

When he had nearly completed his formal education in 1935, John received notice that he had been accepted into one of Japan's most prestigious art schools. However his father had heard rumors of an impending war and feared for his son who was now of warrior's age.

The family members met and decided that John should return to Colorado. All the other Nakas would spend the rest of their years on the family farm in Kurume (less than sixty miles northeast of Nagasaki).

At age 21, John returned to Colorado to live with his brother, Sadao. There in the spring time he met the young daughter of his brother's friend, Alice Toshito Mizunaga. John and Alice married by the end of 1936

On snowy days John would sit in front of a large window sketching trees, especially those with large trunks.

After several years of fighting late springs and early frosts plus hail storms during the summer, the Nakas decided that they had had enough of farming. The family moved to Los Angeles, California in late 1946, where John did landscaping with a special emphasis on Japanese gardens. His business grew, and he would continue this until 1968.

In 1947 he met Sam (Tameichi) Doi, one of the early knowledgeable bonsai men in Southern California. Their friendship lasted until Doi returned to Japan in 1948. Doi encouraged John to read books on bonsai techniques. . The reference work John preferred over all others was the 1934 *Bonsai Geijyutsu* (*The Fine Art of Bonsai*) written by Sawada Ushimaro. John now began serious bonsai creation

His first bonsai this year was a [Montezuma cypress](#) (*Taxodium mucronatum*) this tree would later be donated to the American National Bonsai Collection.

Now, Mssrs. Nagata, Furuya, and Naka decided to show their trees at the November 1950 San Gabriel Valley Fall Flower and Garden Show in Pasadena. When they arrived they were informed that individuals could not display unless they were sponsored by a club. Without a moment's hesitation, the quick thinking Frank Nagata spoke up and said they were a club. And what was the name of the club? Again, without hesitation or benefit of conference he said "The Southern California Bonsai Club".

They were now allowed to enter their trees, which did win a trophy and a blue ribbon at the Show the next day. After the show John and his friends decided to make an honest man of Frank, and in November of 1950, the Southern California Bonsai Club was officially formed by John Naka and four friends

On April 20, 1958, the Southern California Bonsai Society, was renamed The California Bonsai Society. John would be its president for thirty-two years, except for 1959 and 1960 when co-founder Morihei Furuya helmed the club.

John began to travel to other states to teach and demonstrate. Since John was fluent in Japanese, he began writing to Norio Kobayashi (a Japanese bonsai master) in 1963 and the two exchanged letters and information. This led to an invitation from Kobayashi to John to see the Kokufu-ten Bonsai Exhibition in Ueno Park, Tokyo. This would be John's first visit to Japan since he returned to the U.S. in 1935.

Kobayashi introduced John to the leading figures in Japanese bonsai and gave John an annotated business card that helped John with other introductions during his visit.

Kobayashi was a source of encouragement and was responsible for persuading John to look for and use native North American plants as bonsai materials and not rely on the traditional plants used for Japanese bonsai.

John returned from Japan and followed the older master's advice

1973 saw the first edition of [Bonsai Techniques](#), which grew out of a much smaller "Bonsai Mimeograph For Beginners Class" pamphlet. It contains five hundred b&w photos and illustrations and sixteen color plates which depict all aspects of the art. This book was later named *Bonsai Techniques 1*

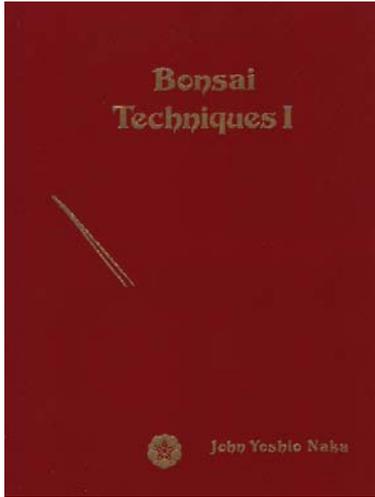
Bonsai Techniques 1 continues to be a treasured resource, few books by other authors of this time have stood the test of time. *Bonsai Techniques 1* has been reprinted 15 times and is still one of the top bonsai text books on sale today.

John Naka continued to support bonsai, for the rest of his life, with exhibitions, symposiums, conventions, classes, demonstrations and writing. He has received many awards in recognition of his talent and contribution to bonsai. Several of John's trees are in National Bonsai Collection of America, and John was one of the editor's for the book for this collection.

John Naka has visited Australia on three occasions and was a very popular and respected speaker and demonstrator at our Bonsai Conventions.

Grandmaster John Yoshio Naka died at Whittier Hospital May 19, 2004,

BOOK REVIEW AND CALENDAR



This wonderful book evolved from the illustrated teaching pamphlets John Naka produced for his classes.

First published in 1973 it is now a standard reference on the book shelves of bonsai artists around the world.

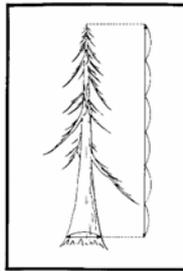
Well written, John also illustrates what he is writing about with photographs or line drawings

The book is well ordered, starting with the basics of tools and equipment, to pots, soils mixes, plant material and an introduction to bonsai styles.

The pages shown here show the technical and artistic way the information is presented throughout this book

Figure 66. Height of tree.

The ideal proportion between the trunk size and the height of the tree is one to six. If the diameter of the trunk at the base of the trunk is one inch, then the ideal height would be six inches. If the diameter of the trunk is 1/2 inch, then the tree should be three inches tall.



5. Shapes of branches.

A general flat plane should be attained in either a triangle, diamond or arrow-head shape. The width should be approximately half of the length.

Figure 67. Bird's-eye view of a triangle branch showing the constructions of the secondary branches.

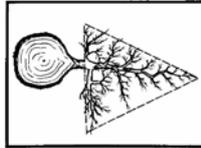


Figure 68. Triangle profile showing primary, secondary, and tertiary branches.

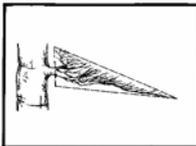


Figure 69. Bird's-eye view of diamond shaped branch showing the constructions of the secondary branches.

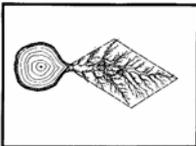
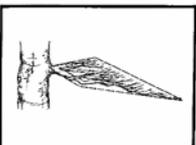


Figure 70. Diamond shaped profile showing primary, secondary and tertiary branches.



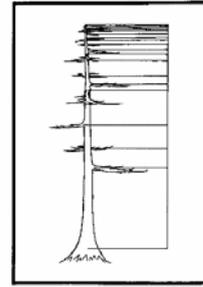
Several views of how the foliage pads might be formed on a bonsai

John takes the trouble to show variations on each of the ideas he presents.

Just browsing through the pages generates ideas for your own trees

Figure 60. Distance between primary branches.

The spaces should be uneven, and wider between the lower branches, and become gradually closer towards the top. In case of too much space, it is better to lower the upper branch instead of raising the lower one.



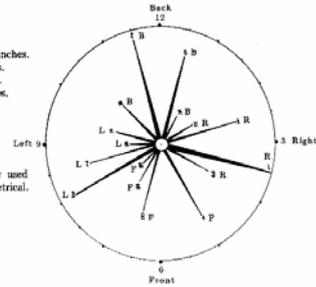
The technical made easy, each point is well described and supported with images

Figure 61. Direction of branches.

No. 1,5,9,13 Right side branches.
No. 2,6,10,14 Back branches.
No. 3,7,11,15 Left branches.
No. 4,8,12,16 Front branches.

Back, is 12 o'clock.
Right, is 3 o'clock.
Front, is 6 o'clock.
Left, is 9 o'clock.

These measurements are never used because they are too symmetrical.



This section of the books explains how to interpret the mood of the rock the tree is to be planted on, and then how to style the tree to make a harmonious whole of the composition.

This book currently retails for about \$75 Australian

A must have for your bonsai library

Figure 464. Shape of this rock resembles an old trunk (INSHO-GATA-ISHI). The tree that grows on top should have a curved trunk, and repeat the same structure as the rock. Branches should be in cascade style.



Figure 465. Another form of INSHO-GATA-ISHI.



Figure 466. Abstract formed rock (CHUSHO-GATA-ISHI). Does not suggest a specific shape. Just an interesting form.



*"What I like about bonsai is that it has a beginning but no end.
A bud today becomes a branch tomorrow.
It is like searching for the rainbow's end; the farther it is pursued,
the farther away it is."*

John Y. Naka

REMEMBER BRING A TREE TO EVERY MEETING

| Date | Event | Details |
|-----------|--|--|
| 22-23 Nov | Central Coast Bonsai Society - Annual Show | |
| 22-23 Nov | 6th National Exhibition of Australian Plants as Bonsai | Australian National Botanic Gardens - Canberra |