sydney city bonsai club inc.

NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

Green Square Community Hall
3 Joynton Avenue Zetland

7pm Tuesday 9 July 2019
Annual General Meeting. Display Focus - deciduous trees.

7pm Tuesday 13 August 2019

Special guest Clinton Nesci talks on taking a tree to next level. Bring in trees you want refinement advice on.

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	Neville
Secretary	David
Treasurer	Chris
Newsletter Editor	Roz
Librarian	Les
Committee	Frank, John & Ed

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.

July Meeting

- Annual General Meeting
- Show table – Focus on deciduous trees
- Bring your own trees to work on

Photo of Will Baddeley's Ulmus Procera (English Elm) in all of its winter beauty. Notice the wonderful pot, which earned him top award for the best tree/ pot combination at the 2016 Swindon District Bonsai Show.

In this issue

Special Guest Clinton Nesci for August Meeting

Clinton Nesci has been working with bonsai at the Ray Nesci Bonsai Nursery for 30 years. He has been the President of the School of Bonsai and has demonstrated at many clubs in Australia and New Zealand.

Using trees brought in by members, Clinton will talk and demonstrate how to take the tree to the next level of refinement. It might be that you need to improve the ramification or develop better foliage pads etc.

Clinton will bring a few bonsai stock starters so remember to bring some cash with you. If you want to purchase some Nesci bonsai soil, then you need to bring $14 per bag to the July meeting and give it to Bryan. Those who want to order after the July meeting need to direct deposit $14 per bag into the club account then email Bryan bnc2009@tpg.com.au with their details by Saturday 6 July. SCBC account details:

Account name: Sydney City Bonsai Club, Incorporated
BSB: 032-152
Acct number: 166305
Please include: "Soil, & Member's Name in payment description.

The club charge of $14 per bag provides $2 per bag to help the club bring experts like Clinton to enhance your bonsai knowledge and experience.

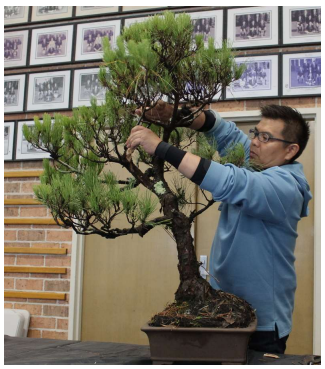
MR FUJIKAWA STYLES JBP AT BBTH

Mr Fujikawa Styles Japanese Black Pine at 2019 Bonsai By the Harbour

Mr. Masayuki Fujikawa is a highly awarded, world renowned bonsai artist who completed a 10 year apprenticeship with Masahiko Kimura and then 11 years as a bonsai professional with his own nursery. Recently, Mr Fujikawa was the proud recipient of the top prize at the 2017 Sakufu-ten Bonsai exhibition, an event for which only master level artists are able to enter their own work.

Demonstrating at the 2019 Bonsai By the Harbour, Mr Fujikawa showed us how to transform old Japanese Black Pine that had been rescued from years in a pot behind a garage into a credible bonsai. When rescued, the tree only had about 100 needles on it and had to be nursed back using Seasol and Maxicrop and placed in semi-shade for a couple of years. In this demonstration Mr Fujikawa had to use some bending techniques which really stretched the tree to its limits.

At the outset Mr Fujikawa explained that the most important artistic aesthetic is the shape and movement of the tree. It has to look natural and whatever the shape it should tell a credible story about how nature has affected the tree.



JBP showing how tree splits 2/3 up the tree and also has multiple bar branching

When finding the best viewing angle, Mr Fujikawa considered the best view of the nebari, the position of the first main branch and the general direction or flow of the tree. He explained that the tree splits into 2 main branches at the top and this will create problems as it would be difficult to give the tree a good balance. He decided to take out the thickest, straight dead-looking branch and jin it.

Once the viewing angle was selected, Mr Fujikawa explained that you have to decide where each major branch is destined to go – that is an overall plan for the tree. Otherwise you cannot work out a strategy for creating the overall shape.

When cleaned, it could be seen that there were many small branches emanating from single positions which will be problematic later. However, given the state of health of this tree, Mr Fujikawa will keep more for now with the view of selectively pruning in the next styling iteration. Foliage has to remain on the tree so that it can be powered.

Another flaw in this three was the bar branching of the two lowest branches. The slightly smaller one was removed and a small jin was created. This small jin created a major anchor point for the major bending that followed.

Both the trunk and branches were relatively thick and hard to move. Mr Fujikawa manually moved each in order to test their rigidity and likelihood of breaking so that he could work out which applications could best be used.

1. Guy Wire application. The back straight branch above the main branch needed to be brought downwards. Using the small jin created earlier Mr Fujikawa directly forced the branch down to its maximum before breaking. In the process a tear appeared as this old branch was brittle but Mr Fujikawa said that in his experience the branch would recover.

Rubber used to protect the branch from the guy wire. Note how the branch shoulder has broken.

2. The second bend was the trunk. The trunk already had a natural curve to it but this curve needed to be enhanced and a new crown needed to be put in position. A lot of muscle was put into this bend and it was absolutely necessary for a second person twist the wire for the anchoring.

The trunk of the tree has been shifted down using a great deal of force.

3. The last major bend was to be applied to a shorter very thick branch with a very straight segment. Mr Fujikawa explained that it was not possible to bend this directly. He set about excavating the top of the branch with a dremel and small chain saw.

Top Left: Excavating upper branch with dremel
Top Right: Placed thick wire in groove
Bottom Left: Wrapped tightly in grafting tape
Bottom Right: Wrapped in raffia and lowered using guy wire.

He then put a double layer of thick wire in the groove he had formed. Next he wrapped the branch in strong but stretch grafting tape and over that he applied wet raffia. The grafting tape stops the water from coming out of the wound and the raffia ensures that the branch does not dry out. Finally he used the two person guy wire technique to move the branch downward. When pulling downward he distributed the force along the whole branch.

Now the trunk and main branches were set, Mr Fujikawa set about doing the secondary and tertiary wiring in order to refine the position of the pads and create a new crown.

The main structure of the tree has been set. It will be given time to recover and then it will be further refined

Cool Bonsai Jack for Moving Branches

On the Sunday at BBTH Mr Fujikawa worked on another JBP and needed to lower the first major branch. He introduced us to a tool specially designed to move large branches. It is essentially a rectangular shaped jack with two padded slightly curved ends. The rectangle is formed by two bars that can be joined to the padded ends by nut and bolt. In the middle of the rectangle is a long screw padded t-bar.

Bonsai Jack

The tool enables you to attach the bottom pad of it to another branch or wire and rejoin the bar to form the rectangle. As you twist the screw bar, the padded T-bar is slowly moved down. Once the branch is in position, you secure a guy wire making sure it is taut so that the branch remains in place when you remove the tool. It is really useful if you have to work alone or are not very strong. Only available in Japan or custom made.

STRUCTURAL WIRING

Structural Wiring Explained by Ryan Neil

These notes have been drawn from viewing Ryan Neil's Bonsai Mirai video on "Structural Wiring." Bonsai Mirai is a great teaching site that you can subscribe to with more than 360 hours of teaching videos.

It is important to distinguish between "Structural Wiring" and "Detailed Wiring". Structural wiring is when we are setting the backbone, that is:-

a) the trunk shape; and

b) the primary branch shape where primary branches are those branches that emanate from the trunk.

By contrast detailed wiring is when you are setting the secondary and tertiary fine branch structure.

Only structural wiring will be considered in these notes. At all times, when wiring you must know and understand what you are trying to achieve – where you you want the trunk and/or branches to end up.

In structural wiring you must focus on:

a) function [the change you want to achieve]; and

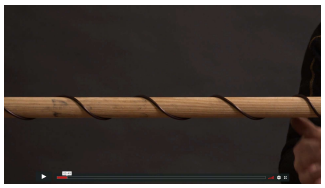
b) aesthetics [it must look neat].

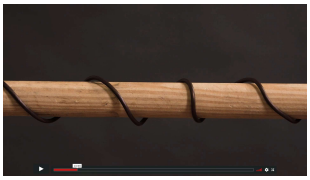
There are three rules you need to follow when applying structural wiring: The wire should always

a) follow the same angle. 55-60^0 is considered the optimum angle as it is more effective than the often advised 45$^{0.}$

b) have the same spacing. Not only does it look neat it spreads the load evenly across the branch reducing the chance of branch breakage.

c) have no gaps. If you introduce gaps, then the branch is no longer supported in that area. The wire is ineffective at that point and increases breakage risk.



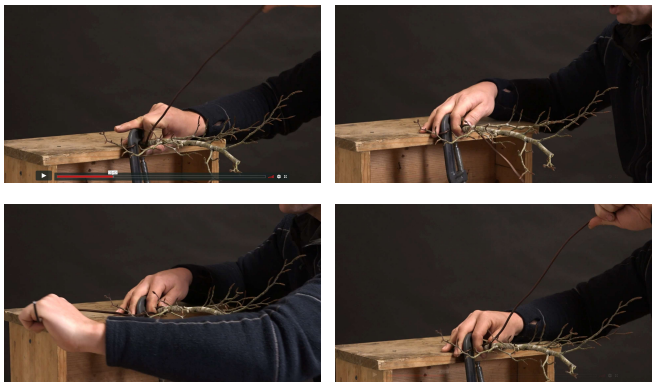


Above: Correctly supporting the "branch" while other hand applies the wire.

Left: Incorrectly applied wire

So how do you achieve the "same angle, same spacing and no gaps" rule?

Firstly you need to stand sideways to the branch. [Note that this is different from detailed wiring where you should stand facing the end of the branch]. The wire you use should be a little longer that you require so that you can get proper leverage. One hand supports the wire on the branch whilst the turning hand pushes straight up, then forward, then down, then toward you. This angular movement is critical to create the same angle, same spacing and no gaps. As you move along the wire the supporting hand moves along the branch so that the branch is always supported.



Standing sideways to branch and holding with one hand, turn wire forward, down, back and up – Use angular movements keeping wire straight

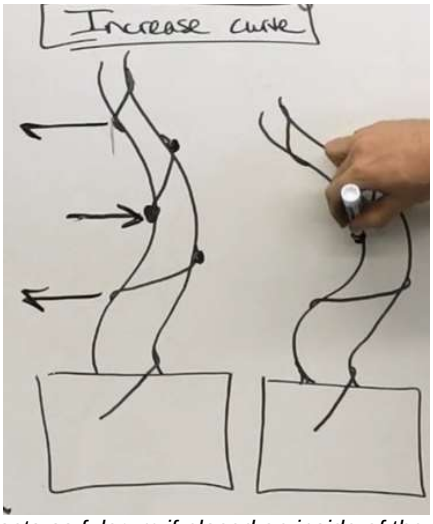
You must always choose a gauge of wire strong enough to move a branch anywhere you want to but not so big that you will cause damage to the trunk/branch.

Bending a Trunk

The first thing to think about is where on the trunk do you want the bend? You can mark that spot with a chalk. Then you need to make sure that the wire will cross on the inside of the proposed bend point. This creates the fulcrum for the bend and the force for pulling from the outside wires on either side of the fulcrum are only a short distance apart. If you do it the other way round, you are likely to create a gap between the branch and wire when you bend and the pulling points will be much further apart making it less effecting and more likely to break the branch.

Once you have established where the wire has got to land up for the bend, you need to work out where the anchor point will be. The anchor point of the tree has to emerge at a 55-60^0 angle from the crown of the root

[the point where the root widens and enters the ground]. So by working backwards counting where the turns will be, you can push the wire in the ground to anchor it in the correct position for the bend then wire it up the trunk using the technique described above.



Wire acts as fulcrum if placed on inside of the bend and the adjacent wire turns act as hooks.

If you wanted to straighten a trunk then you would cross the wire on the outer side of the trunk because you are trying to pull the trunk in the opposite direction to when you are trying to bend it.

Primary Branch Structure

The primary branch structure are all branches emanating from the trunk. They all join the branch through a 360^0 thickened section called the shoulder.

The branch will only move where you want it to if you enter the shoulder and make direct contact from the correct orientation. When you bend there must not be any gap between this point on the shoulder if the wire is to function correctly. This “point of immobility” ensures that the wire “stretches and hardens” at that point so that the branch cannot spring back to its original position. It is critically important that when you commence turning the wire from the shoulder, that you hold the wire hard against the shoulder so that you can set up the holding capacity of the wire from that point of immobility.

If you want to shift a branch:

1. upward then you need to enter the shoulder from the bottom.

2. downward then you need to enter the shoulder from the top.

3. to the right then you need to enter from the left side.

4. to the left then you need to enter from the right side.

When choosing which branches you will wire you should choose similar size branches and wire in pairs. You also need to take into account where the trunk wires already exist so that you do not cross over these. When wiring deciduous trees, the general approach is from the bottom as these branches naturally go up before they go down. When wiring conifers the approach is usually from the top as these branches usually go down directly from the shoulder.

Wire entering from bottom for this deciduous tree

Wire entering from top for this conifer

There is one frequently encountered exception to the above 4 rules. It is when a branch forms an acute angle to the trunk and you want to pull it downward. It you entered the shoulder from the top in this case, you can never get the wire to fit snugly in the acute angle to create the correct stretch across the top. In this instance you need to enter from the bottom but when you are moving the branch downwards you need to rotate the branch to increase the tension of the wire. For larger branches where you cannot rotate as you pull downwards, you will need to rely on guy wires to move the branch into the correct position. The only way to get better at structural wiring is to practice, practice and practice using the “rules” outlined above.

MYTHS ON NATIVES & EVENTS CALENDER

Myths & Misconceptions - Aus Natives

Multi-talented and Australian native bonsai expert Marcela Ferreira gave a talk on the myths and misconceptions of native bonsai at the 2019 AABC.

Myth 1 'Natives Don't Make Good Bonsai"

Australian Natives can be developed into good bonsai providing you stop comparing them to Japanese bonsai. You can collect or grow natives from carefully selected stock. With a bit of creativity you can get a good bonsai relatively quickly.

Callistemon from garden plant (left) to beautiful bonsai

Myth 2 "Natives Don't Like to Be Root-Pruned

Although you need to be a bit conservative natives can be root pruned. Marcela personally repots all year round but is careful with after care giving morning sun and then protection. She has found a better success rate with root pruning in the cooler months.

Myth 3 "Natives Don't Like to Be Wired

In nature some native species have drooping branches. They survive in nature below the horizontal!You can wire below the horizontal but it helps to ensure the tips point upward and can capture the sunlight. Because of the brittleness of older stock, copper wire is better because it has better holding capacity.

Myth 4 "Natives Don't Like to Be Fed"

Untrue – but you must use the correct type – one low in phosphorus. Marcela alternates her fertilising regime every three months for best results.

Myth 5 "Natives Don't Need Water"

With the open mixes usually used for natives watering is a must. Always check your trees. Trees recently collected and/or found in swampy landscapes particularly need lots of watering.

Myth 6 "Natives are not long-lived

Even reputedly short lived acacias can be kept for 40 years plus as bonsai. It appears that with the care given under good bonsai care natives can survive very long periods.

Myth 7 "You Must Seal All Cuts"

Marcela has found that natives have their own sealing properties in response to our climate and hence she does not use sealants with her cuts.

Myth 8 "Style Natives using Standard Rules"

Australian natives do not naturally grow like trees in Japan. Appreciate our natives for their own characteristics. The styling of the tree should be neat and with an overall shape that resembles a bonsai – that is a tree in miniature. As Ryan Neil has said "You should let the tree lead the dance".

Bonsai Events Calendar

Date	Event	Details
3-4 Aug 2019	Earth & Fire Bonsai Pot Exhibition & Sale	Building 16A Balcombe Heights Estate, Balkham Hills. Enquiries:mobile 0404475002 / e-mail: lomov@hotmail.com).
23-25 Aug 2019	The Tops Weekend Illawarra	Stanwell Tops Conference Centre.
30 Aug-2 Sept	Bonsai Masters-Ryan Neil & Kunio Kobayashi	National Arboretum, Canberra
7-8 Sep 2019	Central Coast Bonsai Club Annual Show and Bonsai Open Competition	Mingara Recreational Club Mingara Drive Tumbi Umbi
7 Sept 2019	Bonsai Society of Sydney Annual Show	Community Centre 6 Darley St Forrestville
20-22 Sep 2019	Bonsai Society of Australia Show	Harvey Lowe Pavillion, Castle Hill
8-10 Nov 2019	Newcastle Bonsai Society Exhibition	Charlestown Bowling Club, Charlestown