



NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

Green Square Community Hall

3 Joynton Avenue Zetland

7pm Tuesday 13 August 2019

Clinton Nesci talks on taking trees to the next level

7pm Tuesday 10 Sept 2019

Focus on Repotting

CONTACT DETAILS



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COMMITTEE

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

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.

August Meeting

- Clinton Nesci will talk on taking trees to their next level. Bring in trees that you want Clinton to advise on.
- Bring your favourite tree for the display bench.



<https://shohin-europe.com/2019/03/04/repotting-season-has-started/>

Morten Albek of Shohin Europe comments on spring repotting for deciduous shohin. "It is time just before leaf opens showing full activity in the tree. Only trees that have a rootball health problem are repotted. Or when a new pot is a priority because of aesthetical reasons."

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Reminders

Special Event for August

This month Clinton Nesci will talk on "Taking your Trees to the Next Level". So that club members get the most benefit, Clinton will select a number of club member's trees to use as examples. This means that you should bring in trees that you want advice on. Clinton will also bring a small selection of stock plants for cash purchase on the night. If you haven't yet finalised your order for soil with Bryan, you will need to ensure that your money has reached the club's bank at the latest by this weekend. Otherwise your order will not be processed. Bank details are in last month's newsletter.

Temporary Traffic Changes on Hansard Street from Joynton Av

Hansard Street is expected to be closed from Joynton Avenue through August. This means that you will need to enter Portman street using Epsom Road into Dunning Avenue and Hansard street if coming from the south. Northern access to Portman street is not changed.

REPOTTING BONSAI

It's Repotting Time for Deciduous Trees

It's late winter/early spring and repotting season has commenced for deciduous trees. Deciduous trees are best repotted just before bud swell. Regular repotting is critical to prevent the tree from being pot-bound and ultimately starving to death. The repotting process will supply the tree with new nutrients, air and more water. Evergreens including conifers and natives should wait until it is a bit warmer-at least until late August early September. Figs are best repotted in early summer.

How often should I repot?

Fast growing trees need to be repotted every two years (sometimes even every year), while older, more mature trees need to be repotted every three to five years. Some natives may have to be repotted twice a year.

Before you repot it is best to check on your deciduous trees in early spring by carefully removing it from the pot. Your tree will need to be repotted when roots circle around the root system or completely fill the pot making watering difficult. Other factors that determine whether to repot or not are container size, soil type (e.g. if organic component of soil has broken down making watering difficult) and overall health of the tree.



Definitely in need of a repot! Bottom layer of roots will be taken off with a sharp knife or paint scraper.

If the roots are still contained in the soil and the tree looks healthy then wait another year before checking again. Some people repot on a routine basis saying that it helps with consistent growth every season.

Getting the tree out of the pot.

If the root growth has been vigorous, you will need to use a Japanese sickle or serrated knife to separate it

from the edge of the pot. Particularly for large trees, the idea is to drag out the soil on the very edge of the pot leaving the remaining root ball intact. Next you need to cut the anchor wires underneath the pot. Check if the tree has been released. If the trunk starts to move independently of the root system then you should drag out more soil from the edge of the pot and check what is causing the tree to be stuck.

Checking root health

Check the root health: You should be looking for lots of healthy fine roots often with beneficial mycorrhizal fungi; and no rotting roots (soil not draining/ overwatering), no curl grubs. This destructive pest they have a white body an orange brown head and strong mouthparts and usually rest in a "U" shape. They chew on the trees root system robbing it of its important fibrous roots. Best way to kill them is to submerge the tree in water for up to a day.

Trimming the roots

If the roots have circled the bottom of the pot then you should use a knife or sharp paint scraper the take off the bottom layer. This causes less damage than teasing out all of the roots and then cutting them.

Next using a chop stick carefully free up matted roots and tease out the soil around the sides of the rootball to make room for the new soil then do the same under the plant. Clean out any areas where old broken down soil with dead roots may have remained. This is particularly important under the core area of the tree where the tap root has been removed.

If your plant has a very tight root mass and you have removed a large section under the core of the tree then you should poke 3 to 4 holes through from the core with chopsticks, leaving them there for later removal so you can back fill the core area with soil later.



Using sharp scissors make clean cuts to the root ball removing any damaged and protruding roots and free up any matted roots. You should not remove more that 30% of the rootball.

REPOTTING BONSAI *CONTINUED*

Finally, clean the surface layer of the soil where you have put lots of fertiliser and with constant watering made it hard so water does not penetrate into the soil.

Preparing the pot and anchor points

If you are reusing the pot, then you need to wash it and clean it and cover the drainage holes. Think about how you want to orient your tree so that you plan your anchor points. It is better to use galvanised wire for anchoring because it will not stretch like copper or aluminium. You need to have three points to secure your tree. Measure the distance between the drainage holes and make right-angle bends so that the wire fits snugly across the bottom of the pot between the holes and extends through them.



Anchor wires snugly fit across bottom of pot. 2 of the 3 wires are pulled to outside and middle two wires are joined and pulled through middle of root system.

Adding the soil

Using the appropriate free draining potting mix, put a layer of soil on the bottom of the pot and add a mound of soil where the core of the tree will sit. Now place the tree in the pot and make sure you check the orientation to get the best viewing angle. Only after you have the tree in its correct position you continue holding the tree and bulk back fill the pot with soil so that the tree will no longer move. At this point you can tie in the anchors.

Anchoring Using Bamboo Tie Method



Drive a pointed bamboo stick into the soil and use another flat stick to push the bamboo down whilst twisting the wire until it is tight. Cut off excess wire

Removing air pockets from soil (Chopsticking)

Now you need to back fill the soil using a chopstick to remove any air pockets including the ones under the core. On the sides of the container push the chopstick to the bottom of the container at the steepest angle and jiggle the chopstick to open up a bit of space and then direct the soil into it. Move in an up and down rhythm opening up a space and filling the space. This does not need to be done with more force than your hand. If you apply heavy force you will damage the roots. Work your way right around the pot. Also don't forget to back fill the holes you made to reach the core. Make sure you get the soil in on both sides of the stick.

Levelling and Top Dressing the Tree

Once the back filling process is finished remove any excess soil from the top of the pot. You need to make sure you leave half a centimetre of space below the rim so that when you water the tree, the water will run into the pot and not over the pot. Finally, you dress the tree. Some people use a thin layer of crumbled spagnum moss to ensure the top of the soil is solidified and does not move and others put gravel or something similar to hold the soil in place.



Top dressing with crumbled spagnum moss stabilises the soil. Roots will not grow where soil keeps moving.

Deep water the tree

If you have a tub large enough, you can deep water the tree. Leave it submerged until all air bubbles stop. I often add some Seasol to this water to help with root rejuvenation. If the tree is too large for the tub, water it at least 3 times heavily to wash out any crushed fine particulates.

After Care is Critical

Place the tree in a protected area – out of the wind and direct sun at first. Then after a week or two slowly introduce it back into morning sun only and when it has shown some new growth it can go back onto its normal bench.

FUJIKAWA RESTYLES JUNIPER

Masayuki Fujikawa Restyles Juniper at 2019 Bonsai By the Harbour

Masayuki Fujikawa is a prizewinning Japanese artist who studied under the famous Kimura.

When first observing this tree Mr Fujikawa explained that “some lovely sharis in the trunk and nice movement was put into the tree a long time ago, However the tree needs to be given a “new life”. Mr Fujikawa recommends a literati style with few branches and a small crown.



Juniper with good shari features needs a “new life”

After experimenting with a number of positions he selected a new angle. The new proposed crown area exposed a partially rotten section and although he placed it at the back it will be difficult to bend this part of the tree without breaking it. He explained that he will put aluminium wire into the rotten bit and tightly wrap it with stretch grafting tape and wet raffia and take a chance on bending it.



Mr Fujikawa used aluminium wire, stretch grafting tape, raffia and copper wire to bend the rotten section.

If you see rot in Junipers, it may not be as simple as when each live vein fattens it can go in different directions creating twists and turns so when you bend you need to be very careful. With this tree he explained that the rot appears to be recent and so the branch has

not yet set and become too brittle so he can attempt the bend.

He then looked for the first branch and showed that there are two large branches coming from the same point.



Mr Fujikawa pointing out the “flaw” of two thick branches high up which will be kept for now.

This is a flaw in the tree but in this case he has no other options for now and will keep both and hopefully as the tree develops he may eventually take one off later. For the health of the tree you may have to go with the flow of the tree and be creative in your design.

All bonsai should have a crown. It is important to know the guidelines for well designed bonsai and then when you experience a tree, you can “step away” from the guidelines when the individual tree sets the agenda. Mr Fujikawa explained that there are “no mistakes” in bonsai and nothing in design will be “exactly right”.



“New life” given to this Juniper

HOOD BROTHERS AT 2019 BBTH

Hood Brothers at 2019 BBTH

The Hood brothers, Michael and Shaun appeared at BBTH this year and undertook two very different demonstrations. Michael did a planting on a mallee root whilst brother Shaun worked on a very advanced twisty Juniper.

Michael -Planting on a Mallee Root

Of the 700-900 species of Eucalyptus endemic to Australia, over 50 percent of them are known as mallees. Instead of just a single trunk, mallees have many stems that rise from a large bulbous woody structure called a lignotuber, or mallee root. Most mallees are slow growing, tough trees which originate from arid and semi arid regions but some extend from Tasmania to the tropics.

Michael explained how he prepared the very tall mallee root that will function as the main backbone for a juniper tree and moss planting.

He drilled holes through the hardened cement to enable copper wire to be drawn through the base and used as anchoring points for a future small tree along with the main steel rod which protruded from the sides of the cement base forming the main anchors to the pot. Although mallee root will last a very long time, if you are worried about wet rot then you can use wood hardener.

Before actually securing the mallee root to the pot, Michael used pre-prepared muck (clay, spagnum moss, peat moss and 10% cow manure) to fill the upper natural crevice/hollow for a young Sargent's Juniper. He explained that you should drill a hole or create an escape route for water to drain from this upper planting crevice/hollow. You need to wire the plant before you plant it.

In the design Michael wanted the viewer to see the apex at the back and the two main branches to swing around the mallee root. On this mallee root there was another smaller hollow, where spagnum moss was used ready for planting a clump of moss. He used a couple of copper wire hooks to secure the moss clump.



To stabilise the base a wire stainless steel rod and cement were used to enable wires through the drainage holes of the pot to anchor the root.



Preparing the pot for wiring and anchoring in the mallee

He finished off the setting by adding soil and planting a variety of collected lichen and moss from sandstone rocks in the pot.



Although the planting is quite sparse at present, there is much room for further development of the existing foliage in the upper tree and planting an additional small tree at the bottom.

Although the tall mallee root had a flat base, it needed to be stabilised and tied securely in its pot. To do this Michael had placed a stainless steel rod along the base of the mallee root and created a wide base using Bunnings wet cement. When using the cement, he put styrofoam and plastic under the cement, so there would be natural leakage holes so that water could reach the pot's drainage holes.

2019 BBTH AND EVENTS CALENDAR

Shaun Hood – a New Twist on an Advanced Juniper

Here are a few photos from Shaun’s work on a very advanced Juniper. He explained that he cut the top off so the tree could get more light and did the sharis 6 months ago. In the transformation, Shaun wanted to keep the long foliage, but thin and creating multiple long jins to exposed the multiple twists in the trunk.



Top Left: Juniper at start of the demonstrations
Top Right: Shaun cleaning out unwanted branches
Bottom Left: Wiring after jin creation and opening up tree
Bottom Right: Tree now opened up to expose twisted trunk

Alan Peck Workshops His Native at BBTH

Alan Peck from Newcastle Bonsai Club took advantage of advice from Masayuki Fujikawa in order to take this native to its next stage. Workshopping under the direction of international experts is a fantastic way of getting your trees onto their next stage. No matter if you are experienced like Alan or just someone new to bonsai, you will come away with new ideas and a better bonsai. Here are a few photos.



Top Left: Tree at the start of the workshop.

Top right: Alan working on the detailed wiring

Left: Final positioning of the main first branch, and slight reorientation of plant along with Alan's meticulous wiring and trimming improved this tree dramatically

Bonsai Events Calendar

Date	Event	Details
10 Aug 2019	Aust National Bonsai Association Market Day	10 am-1 pm East Ryde Scout Hall 25 Miller St Ryde.
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 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	10am-4 pm Community Centre 6 Darley St Forresterville
20-22 Sep 2019	Bonsai Society of Australia Show	Harvey Lowe Pavillion, Castle Hill