



### NEXT CLUB MEETING

#### Tote Centre Community Hall

100 Joynton Ave., Zetland

**NOTE** – at last, we are at the TOTE for our next meeting.

### CONTACT DETAILS



0432 461 025



[info@sydneycitybonsai.org.au](mailto:info@sydneycitybonsai.org.au)



<http://sydneycitybonsai.org.au>



PO Box 486  
Summerhill NSW 2130

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Patron	TBA
President	Chris
Vice President	Vacant
Secretary	David
Treasurer	Bryan
Newsletter Editor	Bryan/John/Chris
Librarian	Vacant
Committee	Frank, John, Ed

### MEMBERSHIP

Full membership	\$40
Concession	\$25
Family	\$55
Pensioner	\$25

### AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

February meeting –

- Root over Rock style topic
- Updating of Bryan's root-in-tube project

### NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

- Feedback on last meeting Page 2
- Meeting venue for February Page 2
- Easter Show arrangements Page 2
- On-line matters Page 3
- Swap table Page 3
- Matching Pot and Tree Page 3
- Things to do this month Page 5
- Bonsai Events Calendar Page 5

### EDITORIAL MATTERS

Hoping this e-mail finds you well and still coping satisfactorily with the Covid-19 challenges. The Tote venue is now available – at last.

If you have a project underway, have a query, want to sell/swap/buy something, or otherwise have a tale to share, please get in contact via e-mail at [info@sydneycitybonsai.org.au](mailto:info@sydneycitybonsai.org.au) or one of the Committee members.



Fair effort!

### FEEDBACK ON LAST MEETING

The Club's last meeting for 2020 took place at the Little Bay Coast Centre for Seniors facility. The meeting was a combined Xmas party and AGM. Mandated Covid restrictions were enforced and people generally responded well to the Covid requirements. A QR code and manual log-in sheet were available for registration of attendees.



People attending the meeting pre-registered as required by number restrictions.

Approx. 9 people attended which was disappointing. The AGM commenced at approx. 7.00pm and Neville performed the Returning Officer duties. All positions were declared vacant and voting for the vacant Committee members ensued. Most of the sitting executive were returned. The results are:-

President - Chris

Vice President – Vacant

Secretary – David

Treasurer – Bryan

Newsletter Editor –

Chris assisted by Bryan and John

Librarian – Vacant

Committee – Frank, John, Ed

**Neville is having a well-earned rest from Committee duties – his past tireless efforts on the SCBC Committee in various roles are warmly and appreciatively acknowledged.**

The Xmas party followed and as requested a number of decorated trees were brought along. Attendees were encouraged to partake of refreshments (other than the ones Chris inadvertently left at home!) provided by the Club.

The Swap Table was also in operation and it is proving popular. Lucky door prizes were awarded. General discussions and recollections of a tough year proceeded until the meeting was closed at approx. 9.00pm.

### **MEETING VENUE for FEBRUARY**

The Tote is now available so we will have the February meeting there at the usual time of 7.00pm. The main topic will be discussions of Members' experiences with "Root-over-Rock" style bonsai. I would be surprised if anyone did not have some combination of a tree, pot and rock. Hence, there is unlikely to be an excuse for not being able to contribute to the display and discussion. Don't be shy and bring along a tree and a story.

In addition Bryan will update us with his progress on developing roots in a tube. It's been about a year since we last saw his experiment so an update is due.

The meeting will be conducted in compliance with current Covid restrictions which will include:-

- The number of attendees will be limited to the capacity of the premises, hence,
- All attendees will have to register their intention to attend by Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> Feb via the Club e-mail [info@sydneycitybonsai.org.au](mailto:info@sydneycitybonsai.org.au) or contacting Bryan direct
- A record of all attendees is required by QR code.
- Social distancing will be maintained or where this is impractical, facemasks will have to be worn. Please bring your own mask.
- Hand sanitiser will be provided.
- If you intend to work on your trees you will need to provide your own equipment and tools – sharing is not recommended.

**If you are feeling unwell, exhibiting ANY Covid related symptoms or have been in contact with people in isolation or affected by Covid, please act responsibly and do not attend the meeting.**

If you have a tree that you would like someone to have a look at please bring it along. If you want to work on your tree(s) that's fine but bring all your own material, tools, etc.

Due to Covid requirements, there will be no coffee, tea, or refreshments provided. Bring your own supplies please.

### **ROYAL EASTER SHOW ARRANGEMENTS**

**At this stage** the Royal Easter Show will be proceeding, from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021. There will be a bonsai competition but only for two days duration, i.e. judging on 7<sup>th</sup> April and displays on 8<sup>th</sup> April. Members are encouraged to enter the



competition. Entry nominations close on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021. The entry cost (\$35) will cover one or multiple entries in a wide variety of classes and includes a day pass. **Entry costs will be refunded if the Show does not proceed.** See the RAS website (or Chris) for details.

We will have a small cart, not a stand, for the two judging/display days. If you would like to do a “shift” on the cart see Chris but places will be limited.

### ON-LINE MATTERS

#### FACEBOOK PAGE

The private Facebook page run by John Brown is progressing steadily and anyone interested in participating should contact John for an invitation – just look for this handsome gentleman.



**John Brown**

### SWAP TABLE at FEBRUARY MEETING

There will be a “Swap” Table at the February meeting so if you have Bonsai related articles to sell, swap, give away or otherwise trade, bring them along - 10% from sales goes to the Club.

### FINDING A POT TO COMPLIMENT

#### YOUR TREE by Bryan

*“A tree is a tree, a pot is only a pot. It does not become a Bonsai until these two are combined and form a harmony together. A large part of the art of Bonsai is the experience of a tree that has become detached from its ground and now lives in a pot.”*

*bonsaiempire.com*

But just how do we choose an appropriate pot to set off our tree?

Let us look at a few points to consider.

#### Functional considerations

These are the everyday considerations in keeping your bonsai alive. Start by considering your tree’s wants and needs. Understand your ability to support your tree to meet these needs. Realistically assess the time and effort you have or are willing to give in order to care for your tree. How often can you water your tree? How heavy a pot can you lift to move?

#### Consider the pot

- Drainage
- Heat retention
- Water retention
- Wiring holes
- Depth
- Size

#### Consider your tree

- Tree growth patterns (Does the tree have rapid root growth? Does the tree have particularly high water needs?) (Fruit, flowering trees, maples, Australian natives generally do better with deeper pots that allow more stable moisture retention)
- Your ability to check and care for your trees (How much time and effort are you willing to expend to ensure your tree is appropriately watered?)
- Stage of growth and development - is it in training (training pot?) or more fully developed (slower growing, less repotting), does it have a large canopy (possibly larger pot to bring into balance), is it quite tall (deeper pot to ground)?

#### Consider the growing location

- Where your tree is going to be displayed can affect the pot you choose. Are there conditions you need to counter (heat, dryness, sun etc.). Do you need to slightly overpot to help it survive between watering when you are away (hot days, vacation)? Would a tray help hold water or help create a conducive microclimate? Do you get



someone in to care for your trees when on vacation or do you use an automatic watering system (closed in pots can require special watering needs)?

There are standard rules in choosing a bonsai pot. These rules are general in nature and should only be used as a guide. They are, however, a good starting point in refining your choice of the best pot for your tree.

#### Pot size

- Pot height the same height as trunk is wide measured just above the nebari or root line
- Oval pots, width around 2/3 the trees height
- Round or square pots, width around 1/3 the trees height (larger if there is a large dense foliage canopy).
- Rectangular pots, height drops to compensate for the increased width.
- Deeper pots, visually anchor slanting (Shakan), semi cascades (Han-kengai) and cascade (Kengai) styles.

#### Colour

General rule is to choose a colour that is found in the tree. This may be in the bark, leaf, flower, fruit. In general, you are safer choosing earth tones, brown, grey, muted greens. Contrast is also an option with muted blues, light greens or more vibrant colours.

#### Bonsai attributes

For the sake of simplicity bonsai trees are often classified as having 'Masculine' and 'Feminine' traits. Trees will often display both but determining which are more dominant for your tree will help in conveying your trees story and developing the best composition to bring out your tree's attributes.

#### Masculine traits

- Rough craggy bark
- Angular growth
- Dense branching
- Thick trunk

#### Masculine pots

- Deeper
- Angular
- Clean lines
- Larger feet
- Large rims

#### Feminine traits

- Smoother bark
- Curving growth
- Sweeping branches
- Less dense branching

#### Feminine pots

- Soft, rounded lines
- Smaller feet
- Lower/flatter

#### Androgynous trees

#### Androgynous pots

- Round pots
- Drum pots

#### Scene creation

It is a good idea to consider the native conditions in which your tree would be found (clinging to the side of a cliff, amidst a forest clearing, near a stream, on the coast, struggling in the desert, etc. It should have a story. For example; enjoying life alongside a forest brook or exposed and struggling to survive amid lightning storms. Your pot choice can support this.

Environment	Tree traits	Classification	Pot
Clearing, protected growth, good life	flowing, sinuous branches	feminine	more refined, softer shape, natural (softer) colour
Exposed, struggling against the elements	rugged, angular branching with jins and dead wood	masculine	angular, less refined, unglazed or unevenly glazed in natural colours

These considerations should give you a good start in choosing a pot to suit your tree. Remember, when you look at a 'great' bonsai, look at the pot it is in. The pot likely suits the tree - enhancing it. Search the internet for pot ideas, build up a photo library of pot and tree combinations you like. Check out pot displays at bonsai shows. Bring your tree along when you go to choose a bonsai pot or consider, commissioning a potter to create a pot for just for your tree. Chuck Iker, outlines a good general idea for choosing the correct bonsai pot for your tree.

*I use a very simple principal when matching pot to tree. It involves the first glance at the composition. As in a painting the artist works to control the movement of the eye. A good composition makes*



*an immediate statement. It is harmonious and leaves you with emotion. If your eye only sees a tree that is out of balance with its vessel then the landscape is disturbed. If your eye immediately jumps to the pot then the pot is not correct for the tree. Neither can overpower the other. They must work harmoniously.*

*I HAVE ONE MORE FINAL TEST OF YOUR COMPOSITION. DOES IT MAKE YOU SMILE? DOES IT BRING YOU JOY? CAN YOU NOT WALK PAST IT WITHOUT STOPPING AND ADMIRING? IF IT DOES, PERFECTION HAS BEEN ACHIEVED, EVEN IF IT'S A FOOTBALL HELMET. [IKERBONSAIPOTS.COM](http://IKERBONSAIPOTS.COM)*

### THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH - FEBRUARY

#### By John

Recap of tasks that can be undertaken throughout the Summer months include:

1. Watch for very hot days. Remember, excessive heat does not kill Bonsai, a lack of water does. Water often enough to ensure the soil never dries out. This may mean watering 2 or 3 times a day. Mulching of the top of the soil can help reduce evaporation through the day. Moss on top of the soil can be a good indicator of soil dampness.
2. Monitor trees through the warmer months as the warmer, humid weather can encourage pest and disease .

3. Summer is the time to perform large chops on Japanese Maples and many other deciduous trees. The wounds will heal faster and not bleed as much as they would if cut during winter.
4. Pinching tips and pruning new growth should continue on all trees through the Summer.
5. Some species need considerable moisture through Summer including Wisteria, Banksia, Swamp Cypress, Callistemon and Melaleuca. They may need to stand in water trays.

Specific tasks for February include:

1. Most natives can be repotted throughout the summer months. Watch for bud movement and then repot and root prune. Alternatively cut back hard then wait for the new buds to start to appear, then repot. You can root prune very hard at this time.
2. Many trees will slow down growth in late summer but keep up the feeding until start of Autumn and then reduce the amount on deciduous trees, This will assist in achieving nice colour later in the Autumn.
3. [Babingtonia](#) which may be in flower can also be pruned back straight after flowering late in the Summer and re potted.

#### Sources:

1. AusBonsai Wiki
2. "Bonsai, Its Art, Science, History and Philosophy" by D R Koreshoff

### BONSAI EVENTS CALENDAR

Illawarra BS newsletter NOTE Illawarra have re-commenced their meetings, with restrictions		Available on request or visit Illawarra website
Yarra Valley Bonsai Society newsletter		Available on request
19 <sup>th</sup> & 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Victorian Native Bonsai Club Show	In Victoria – more details on request
7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	Royal Easter Show Bonsai Display (SCBC 'Cart')	Consider showing & helping out
24 <sup>th</sup> February 2021	Nominations for entry to Royal Easter Show close	Refunds provided if the show is cancelled

Some club meetings and events have been resumed so see specific club websites or contact for details.