



NEXT CLUB MEETING

Tote Centre Community Hall

10 0 Joynton Ave., Zetland

NOTE – there is no dedicated parking for the venue but parking in adjacent streets is usually available.

If dropping off, there is normally parking near the entrance that can be used temporarily.

CONTACT DETAILS



0432 461 025



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

The theme for the April meeting is “**Trees that need help**” so bring along examples and get some assistance from club members. Also, David will give a talk regarding soil mixes

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EDITORIAL MATTERS

Hoping this e-mail still finds you well. Our meeting schedule remains unaltered but subject to current Covid requirements.

We always welcome any contributions from members, so 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 info@sydneycitybonsai.org.au or one of the Committee members.



What a champion tree looks like – just ask Bryan

SCBC wishes to thank Sydney City Council for their continued support for our Club by providing the meeting hall at a concessional rate.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Club Executive met last month as normal. There was discussion on the Royal Easter Show preparations and whether SCBC should continue with its association with the event. We will have more to say when the current Show is over and we have some experience with the new format.

There was discussion related to how the Club and its members, have responded to the resumption of meetings. The discussion was more positive than previously as there is a general feeling that the meeting situation is improving with a larger attendance and enthusiastic member involvement. It was good to see new members and the return of familiar faces.

The Executive is looking at finalising an Agenda for the year and topics being considered include:-

- Pines – re-potting and control of needle size.
- Figs- trimming, grafting, styling.
- Soil discussion
- Tool selection and maintenance.
- Australian Natives.
- Styling Competition.
- Wiring and shaping.
- Pot selection.
- Pests and diseases.
- Preparing trees for showing.
- Care regimes for deciduous trees.
- Outings to nurseries or other clubs.
- Choosing stock plants.
- Treating an ailing tree.
- Fertilizing.
- Talks by external presenters.
- Others?

If you have any other topics of interest please advise an Executive member and have it put on the list. Looking forward to seeing you at next month's meeting.

FEDBACK ON LAST MEETING

The theme of last meeting was Australian Natives. There were nearly twenty attendees which was pleasing, and a large number of trees. Nowadays everyone seems to have examples of Australian Native trees. Each member gave a short history of their plant(s) and interesting discussions followed. It remains encouraging to see that members are bringing their trees along and are prepared to have a talk about them.

Attached at the end of this newsletter are photos of Australian Native examples provided by members. Chris then provided a demonstration on what you probably should not do to a Eucalypt. The victim tree was a species (unknown) that had progressed from a tubestock to "stock" plant size and then to a largish partial-escapee into the garden.



The substantial roots had taken a good hold of Mother Earth



... which resulted in rapid growth of the tree – it was quite bushy and approx. 2m tall.



After some brutal hacking it was reduced to about 400mm tall and quite bare as shown opposite. The bottom section where the roots that remained in the pot were removed, had to be protected from direct sunlight.



It has been wrapped in some particularly attractive flannelette which will be removed over time, i.e. as it rots away. It remains to be seen how successful the re-potting will be but at the time of writing this article, new shoots were emerging in three places (none of them necessarily ideal!) so the omens are good. However, time will tell.

The night ended with lively discussion amongst members and workshopping trees.

Can I mention that access to the Tote is controlled electronically so we have to start and stop on time. Please be punctual.

Also, it was pleasing to see the return of regular attendees at pre-Covid meetings. Welcome back.

ONLINE MATTERS

FACEBOOK PAGE

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



John Brown

REPORT ON ROYAL EASTER SHOW

The 2021 Bonsai competition and our representation at the Royal Easter Show has come and gone. This was the first show since Covid interruptions, a change in RAS management of the Flower and

Garden exhibits, shortening of the duration of the Bonsai exhibition and a new Club “stand” format.

As may be expected there were some administrative hick-ups and the changes in ticketing arrangements caused a few problems but these were overcome.

The competition itself was successful. There were a good number of entries (60+) but sadly only a few “wow” factor trees. Having said that, there were fewer poor quality trees and there was a very wide variety of species.



The exhibits were very well received by the public and comments were positive. Just to add to the plusses, SCBC competed strongly with Bryan taking out two First certificates, a Champion ribbon and a second. Amanda (Yes I know she is a member of a couple of clubs but we can share her success) took out two First Certificates, a Champion ribbon and some minor places. Chris took out a hard-fought-for Second certificate. All told, a great effort.

SCBC was only allocated a small “ice-cream” cart but its diminutive size did not restrict our contribution to the promotion of Bonsai. Many thanks to the members (Bryan, Chris, David, Frank and John) who put their hands up to resource the cart. There were negatives though. The Bonasi competition was spread over two locations which



was not ideal. The display benches did not allow good access to view some of the trees. The trees were not laid out on the benches to their best advantage. The cart was substantially too small and poorly located. It could be argued the short two-day duration did not justify the considerable time and effort SCBC resources contributed.

SCBC's continued representation at the Royal Easter Show will be discussed and any members with an opinion are encouraged to provide their input through an Executive member.

Regardless of SCBC's continued attendance at the Show, members are encouraged to consider entering the competition as it can provide the challenge and drive to improve your Bonsai skills.



P.S.

At one point the RAS became super desperate when one of their stage presenters did a no-show - SCBC were requested to fill in the gap, bare legs and all.

WHAT'S IN A NAME from Chris

Last month #43 was introduced to Club members, or more correctly the memory of #43. It started me thinking, should you allocate names to your trees, after all every dog and cat I know, has a name. Alphanumerics are more efficient but a bit "cold".

When I was employed by Sydney Water Corporation, I had to occasionally delve into the SWC archives. SWC allocated Plant Numbers to identify equipment items such as tractors, bulldozers, compressors, etc. ... and horses. Back in the day horses were used as beasts of burden in capital works and as such were considered plant items and allocated Plant Numbers and an appropriate description e.g. Plant No. 6 - horse - born May 1933, purchased January 1935, whaler mare, 15hands chestnut with white blaze.

But even in these instances, there was usually an additional bit of information such as, "Named Nellie". It seems even a conglomerate like SWC acknowledged a horse warranted a more sympathetic consideration than a bulldozer. But a plant?

While a plant is a life form, it does not exactly cuddle-up looking for affection etc., so does it warrant being personalised with a name? I say it does and draw your attention to the similarity is has with a cat. Both demand attention, both want to be fed and watered, both lead independent lives, given the right circumstances both may present you with wanted or unwanted offspring, etc. etc. Mind you your tree(s) are unlikely to go next door to be fed. So in the same way cats need a name so do trees. But what name?

Lee had a discussion on this topic some time ago - so long ago that I cannot find the reference but never-the-less the steps I recommend to decide a name goes something like this:-

Determine gender - No use trying to look under the branches. Simple - delicate/pretty trees are female, the roughies are male.

Look at the species - Typically maples, acers, elms and delicate structure trees can have petite names. Privet on the other hand do not.

Look at the trunk - A big fat trunk warrants an appropriately sturdy name.

Look at the foliage - strong foliage - strong name. No foliage, problem solved.

Origin of the tree - Australian natives should have a no-nonsense name, short and sharp.

Keep it simple - Nebuchadnezzar II may appeal to some, but not many.

So there you have it, everything you need to get out there and name your trees. Well nearly everything - you also need a good memory. In my case I have trouble remembering my own name so what hope do I have recalling 150 names? Looks like I will have to stick with numerals but I only have 10 thumbs/fingers??



THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH - April

By John

1. While Spring and the growth and development it brings can seem quite a distance away the preparations for the best possible results start now and over the next few months. We definitely want trees going into dormancy as healthy as possible. So maintain your fertilising programs right through Autumn, but reduce the frequency as the trees slow down growth into winter. This will "harden" the foliage off so it will be prepared for winter. Fertilize with low nitrogen, high potassium and phosphorus organic fertilizer at half strength every two to three weeks. A good low N fertiliser is "blood & bone" and Epsom salts. (Remember, don't fertilise newly repotted trees for two weeks after repotting)
2. Deciduous trees will be turning colour and then dropping leaves. Trees change colour because the plant has run out of vigor for the season. Trees that are pot bound or even trees that missed re potting the previous season will have a shorter growing season. Going early into autumn colour won't do the tree any harm but you have had a reduced development period on that particular tree for the season. As Sydney doesn't get cold enough to really bring out Autumn colours on deciduous trees a tip for helping improve Autumn colour is to put ice on the soil at night. Remove spent leaves on your soil as it can keep it too wet and root rot can result.
3. Maintain tip pruning of Figs
4. All natives and evergreens can be repotted. Tropical evergreen plants such as Figs, Murrayas, Gardenias etc. should be repotted during the warmer months. Repotting of Pyracanthas and Cotoneasters is best left until after their berries have past their peak in late April.
5. Heavy branch pruning of Pines.
6. Needle evergreens (Pine, Spruce and Fir) can be wired.
7. Repot and root prune flowering Quince, Cherry and other fruiting trees. Any Autumn fruit can be removed to strengthen next season's crop. Don't cut roots back too much (remove no more than 1/3 of root mass) and use less than normal richness of soil to reduce risk of root rot. Place repotted trees in sheltered, sunny position.
8. Take leafy semi-hardwood cuttings of Banksia.
9. Look out for bugs like Caterpillars, slugs, snails, aphid, curl grubs, etc. They are out in numbers at the present time.

Sources:

- AusBonsai Wiki
- Dennis McDermonnt
- "Bonsai, Its Art, Science, History and Philosophy" by D R Koreshoff

BONSAI EVENTS CALENDAR

8 May 2021 10.00am-12.00am	School of Bonsai - Buy and Sell day Don Moore Centre Nth Rocks, Carlingford	Contact School of Bonsai if you want to sell or just turn up if you want to buy
	Illawarra BS newsletter	Available on request or visit their website
	Yarra Valley Newsletter	Available on request or visit their website

Many club events have resumed after easing of Covid-19 virus statutory requirements so get in touch with individual clubs for any specific meeting/event conditions.



**AUSTRALIAN NATIVES
MARCH MEETING**



PJ Fig, 200mm tall



Callistemon, 400mm tall



Water Gum, 500mm tall



Ring-in Chinese Elm, 150mm tall



Banyan Fig, 450mm tall



Callistemon, 400mm tall



Callistemon, 250mm tall



Melaleuca, 400mm tall



Leptospermum, 500mm tall



Callistemon, 600mm tall



Leptospermum (future
champion?), 600mm tall