



NEXT CLUB MEETING

Marrickville Community Centre

Unit 44, 142 Addison Rd., Marrickville @ 7.00pm

CONTACT DETAILS



0432 461 025



info@sydneycitybonsai.org.au



<http://sydneycitybonsai.org.au>



PO Box 486
Summerhill NSW 2130

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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

MEMBERSHIP

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

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

NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

• Monthly Meeting Feedback	Page 2
• Change of Meeting Venue	Page 3
• March Meeting Agenda	Page 4
• Swap Table	Page 4
• Facebook Page	Page 4
• Summer/Autumn Styling	Page 4
• Application of RPMs	Page 4
• What people get up to	Page 6
• Articles of Interest	Page 6
• Things to do this Month	Page 7
• Events Calendar	Page 8

EDITORIAL MATTERS

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.



Exposed trunk possibly?



sydney city
bonsai club inc.

MONTHLY MEETING FEEDBACK - FEBRUARY

The February meeting was our first meeting in the new premises – and it was very well attended. The longer established members and a pleasing group of new members pushed the numbers to 18

attendees. This was most encouraging given the significantly smaller numbers at previous meetings. The availability of parking in close proximity to the building was appreciated by all.

Before getting on to deliberations re the trees people brought along, John welcomed new and established members and advised of the Club's thoughts on providing more structured lessons on bonsai related topics. It seemed to have support. Mention was also made on resourcing the Bonsai "cart" at the upcoming Royal Easter Show and bonsai competition entries. Members are encouraged to enter their trees and showcase bonsai to one of the biggest audiences in the state. Entries through the RAS website close on 1st March.

The theme of the meeting was a show-and-tell of "Stock" trees and Figs. There was some discussion of what constituted a "Stock" tree and after a consensus that it could include almost anything, members took pleasure in introducing their charges to attendees. Members seemed to enjoy learning about the examples brought along for the occasion. Discussion moved on to the perennial favourite for bonsai enthusiasts, Figs. There were a number of fine examples and members presented their trees with the usual entertaining tales of their history and expectations for the future. Dialogs filled out the available time – by the time all the trees were addressed it was effectively time to pack up.

There were too many trees to catalogue separately and the Editor was a bit pre-occupied with other matters so only a small collage of photos follows. Too much to take in – what a desirable dilemma.



Plenty of detailed discussion on the (many) trees benched.



Figs of all ages, shapes and sizes



A few non-fig ring-ins
Examples of (one definition of) stock trees



Club-owned trees for sale



Going by the attendance numbers, most members were aware of our new location but for those who may have missed the last Newsletter, we have had a change of venue for our meetings. We have moved to Unit 44 (Bush Music Club), in the Marrickville Community Centre site. Enter the complex at 142 Addison Rd., Marrickville, and proceed towards the North-west corner and look for Unit (shed) 44. It is a weatherboard/ corrugated iron structure. There is road and ramp access to the front door and parking in the near vicinity. Thanks to Gracy, David, Bryan etc. for their efforts in finding a new venue.



**MARCH MEETING AGENDA – NATIVES
and DISPLAYING TREES**

The theme for the March meeting will be Natives. So bring along an example of a native tree species. Note you can bring what you like and some common Figs are natives. As they “had their day” last

month, maybe species other than Figs should be featured.

Also, there will be discussion on presentation of trees for competition or generally – a timely topic with the Royal Easter Show coming up.

SWAP TABLE

There will be a Swap Table at the next meeting which will be stocked with whatever is brought along **AND** surplus trees from our street stall. Members are encouraged to contribute to the table so if you

have surplus tree(s) or materials bring it along. Having some loose change available may see you with a bargain.

FACEBOOK PAGE

The private Facebook page run by John Brown is still going strong and anyone interested in participating should contact John for an invitation. There is some good quality chat on the Facebook page

and members are encouraged to join.

**SUMMER/AUTUMN STYLING
perpetrated by Chris**

I noted my much-neglected Banksia was getting (more) out of control than even I could tolerate. So I decided it needed a bit of attention. I am not sure it needed as much “attention” as it received and whether this particular time of the year was “optimal”. As they say, time will tell. In the meantime I am prepared to take bets on the likelihood of its survival.



**APPLICATION OF RPMs TO
SHARPENING BONSAI TOOLS by Ed**

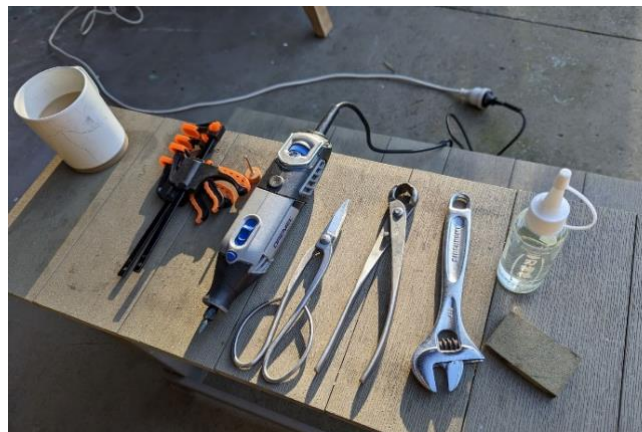
The road to bonsai mastery is one paved with a seemingly limitless collection of crafts to educate oneself in. To most of us, that’s what’s so appealing about it. Be it

wiring, pruning, or horticultural science, the breadth can be confounding and endlessly time consuming. If you’re anything like me, it’s the access to free time that’s the real inhibitor to developing expertise across all aspects of bonsai.

This became apparent to me recently when I decided that I would attempt to outsource the sharpening of my tools. It’s important to have sharp tools as nice, clean cuts allegedly help with healing. Ideally, I’d invest the time in learning how to effectively use whetstones. With shears, that seems like a straightforward proposition, albeit slow and labour intensive. But what of curved tools such as knob cutters? No doubt there’s a technique for that, but the prospect alone was enough to put me off even investigating. Finding someone else to sharpen my tools as a service seemed like a good alternative. At least it seemed as such, until I failed to find anybody offering such a service.



So, what does someone with limited time and a strong desire to take shortcuts do to solve this problem? They find a power tool with enough RPMs to hone even the dulllest edge. Fortunately, I received a Dremel for Christmas that just so happens to spin up to 35,000 RPM, which is quite a few RPMs really.



I approached the application of Dremel technology to bonsai tool sharpening as an experiment. In this experiment I tested the following variables:

- **Tool shape** - Two tools, a pair of ordinary shears and a knob cutter, giving me both flat and curved blades, were used.
- **Stone coarseness** – Two stones, one moderate and one fine coarseness, were used
- **Speed of the Dremel** – Speeds were varied from slow all the way up to full speed

Rather than going into too much depth on the experience, I think it's better I jump straight to my learnings:



- ✓ Operating at the highest RPM seemed like the most suitable approach. It meant that only the most delicate touches along the edge of the blade were necessary to sharpen it. Very little pressure was required.
- ✓ The high RPM seemed to negate the coarseness of the stone. That being said I'd recommend going for as fine a grain as possible, and, be as delicate as possible along the edge.
- ✓ I had no trouble with using the Dremel on either of the tools. The dexterity of the Dremel made it a trivial matter to hone along the blade of the curved knob cutter.

- ✓ With the shears, the sides of the blades that hadn't been sharpened needed a very fine filing to take off the micro bits of metal from the sharpening process. These were catching when closing the shears, although this was barely noticeable.
- ✓ Pay attention to the sides of the blades that have been sharpened originally. Do not make the mistake of sharpening the wrong edge. On shears it will always be the outside edge. With the knob cutter I noticed it had been sharpened on one inside and one outside edge. This appears to be so one blade always sits slightly over the other.



Once I had both blades sharpened I gave them a clean-up with a sabitori block. Then I applied camellia oil to help protect from corrosion. They look almost as good as new.

All in all, it was a matter of minutes to have both tools sharpened. I spent more time figuring out how to use the Dremel than actually sharpening tools. I would hesitate to use this approach or more expensive tools such as my Niwaki secateurs, but for day to day work tools, I highly recommend throwing some RPMs at them.

WHAT PEOPLE GET UP TO

Committee member Ed Hatrick-Smith has a busy life – let him tell you about it.

As a father of two young girls, any discussion about what I get up to outside of bonsai often runs into the reality of being a working parent. That being that I'm rather time-poor. While I love nothing more than being able to dedicate a few hours to my trees, that's a much rarer occurrence than I would like. Combine that with a busy job my trees often come off second best.

We've just moved into a new house in Little Bay. I have a nice, North facing area for my trees with enough space to start growing my collection. I plan to make it nicer with better tree stands at some stage. The property had been vacant for three or so months so we've had a lot of work on trying to make it presentable. In some areas, the grass was well over a foot high. In fact, my lawnmower broke down partway through mowing.

I do have other interests aside from bonsai. Arguably, my other great hobby is PC gaming. Playing a game after the kids go to bed is a great way for me to take my mind off work and the day. I also build and upgrade my PC so I have a deep love of technology.

Over the past few years, I've come to appreciate the need for me to exercise and look after my well-being. With that in mind, I love cycling, lifting weights at the gym, and having a sauna. My perfect day would include each of those activities and time spent working on my trees.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

If you become aware of any articles on the web, or elsewhere, that may be of interest to members, you can use this space to pass on the word. Just send an e-mail to the Club's address with the contact details for the article and we can put it in this section.

The National Bonsai Collection at Canberra has a "coffee table" publication of trees from its collection. The Collection can be viewed at the National Arboretum Canberra and the book purchased through The Curatoreum - go to <https://bit.ly/3RYRqzx>. They also have their annual workshops over 24th-26th Mar 2023 – go to nationalarboretum.act.gov.au for more details.

The February Bonsai Society of Sydney Newsletter has a comparison chart on the chemical content of common fertilisers which may be of interest to you.

The Illawarra Bonsai Show is on 29th-30th April



**THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH by John
MARCH**

Specific tasks for March include:

- Repotting of natives can continue and all evergreens can start now, but if you are experiencing hot weather, then delay till next month.
- Wire can be placed on evergreens as they will be slowing down growth for winter. Use only 'Soft wiring' on branches that need reshaping and avoid heavy wiring on trunks and thick branches.
- Keep pinching back tips on conifers such as Himalayan and Shimpaku Juniper. Remove dead and yellowing foliage with fingertips to allow more light between branches and prevent insects from nesting in dead areas.
- Now is a good time to take [hardwood cuttings](#) from trees.
- Watch for pests such as scale, lace bug and mealy bug. If not sure about identification and treatment, then seek help but treat early as some pests can multiply and cause damage very quickly.

Tasks for Autumn include:

Autumn is the time of year when our trees are slowing down, changing colour, losing leaves and preparing for winter.

- Maintain fertilizing 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. Use low N fertilisers such as "blood & bone" and Epsom salts.
- Deciduous trees will start turning colour and then dropping leaves. Do not leave the spent leaves on your soil as it can keep it too wet and root rot can result. Because Sydney has a very moderate climate you can help the colour change by putting ice cubes on the top of your pot at night.
- Entries for the **Royal Easter Show** bonsai competition will have closed so now its time to prepare your chosen trees for exhibition.

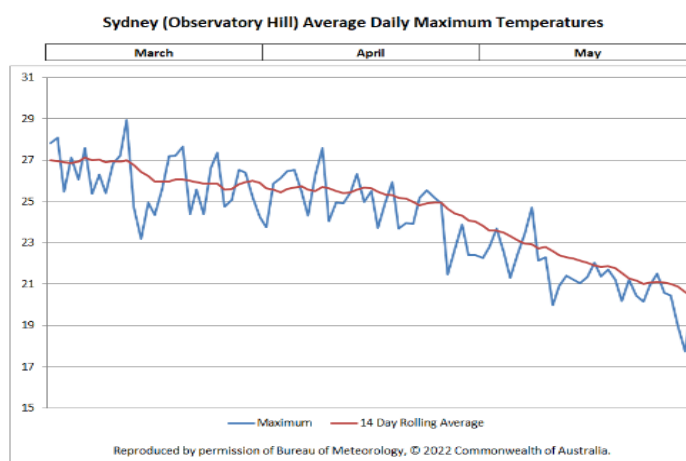
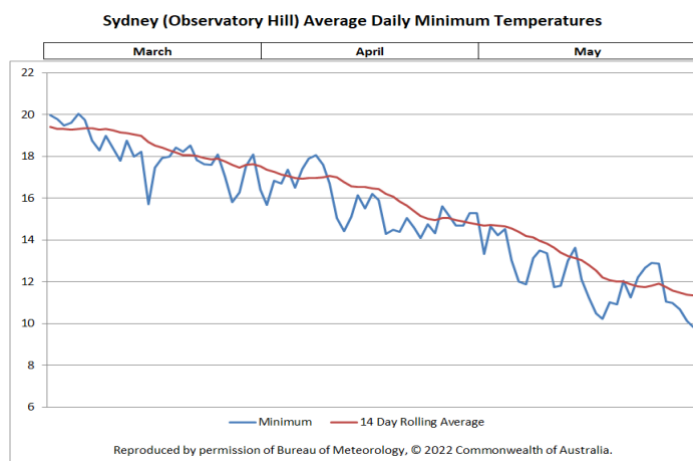
Sources:

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



sydney city
bonsai club inc.

Min/Max BOM temperature forecasts (Observatory Hill) for the upcoming months including 14 day rolling average, provided by David follow:



BONSAI EVENTS CALENDAR

Royal Easter Show 12 th – 13 th April	Bonsai competition at the RAS showground	See website for more details
Bonsai Society of Australia	Visit their website – www.bonsai.asn.au	
Nepean Bonsai Society Newsletter	Visit their website - www.nepeanbonsaisociety.org - see what the mountain people get up to.	
Illawarra Bonsai Society 29 th - 30 th April 2023 Annual Show	Visit their website – www.illewarrabonsaisociety.org - good content in their newsletter	See website for details
Bonsai Society of South Australia website	Website is worth a visit – www.bonsaisa.org.au	
Yarra Valley Bonsai Newsletter	Visit their website - www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au	
Victorian Native Bonsai Club Newsletter	Visit their website – www.vicnativebonsai.com.au - well worth a look.	
School of Bonsai	Visit their website – www.schoolofbonsai.com.au	
Canberra Bonsai Society	Put out a good newsletter - visit their website – www.cbs.org.au	
Central Coast Bonsai Club	For more details go to www.centralcoastbonsai.com.au	
Bonsai Society of Sydney	Go to www.bonsaisocietysydney.org.au	Good article on fertilisers in the latest Newsletter
AABC National Bonsai Convention 19 th – 22 nd May 2023	Check the web for details	Convention is in Perth this year

Check out other clubs' meeting dates via their web-sites or give them a call for meeting details. Attending another club is worth the effort.