



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>



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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
• April Meeting Agenda	Page 2
• Swap Table	Page 3
• Facebook Page	Page 3
• Preparing a tree for display	Page 3
• Bonsai in Buenos Aires	Page 5
• What people get up to	Page 6
• Articles of Interest	Page 7
• 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.



This Azalea would look nice on one of my benches – what are your thoughts Simon?



**MONTHLY MEETING FEEDBACK
MARCH**

The March meeting was our second meeting in the new premises – and it was very well attended, even more participants than the first meeting! The return of longer established members and an expanding group of new members pushed the numbers to 21.

The meeting itself was preceded by a beginners class which kicked off at 6.00pm. This class, which included 7 attendees, was led by Bryan. The feedback is that the content and presentation was well received by attendees and the conversations were many and varied. This was as anticipated given a group of people eager to acquaint themselves with the ins and outs of bonsai were involved. This is the first of a series of lessons and the response so far suggests the remainder of the course will be well subscribed.

At the meeting proper, Bryan welcomed new and established members. Mention was also made re resourcing the Bonsai “cart” at the upcoming Royal Easter Show and members are encouraged to consider a trip to the show to support our cart and join one of the biggest audiences in the state for a showcase of Bonsai.

The theme of the meeting was a show-and-tell of “Native” trees. And there were a lot of impressive specimens tabled including Melaleucas, Banksias, Eucalypts, Lilli Pilli, Peppercorn, Myrtle, Mistletoe, and a few oddball species that were quite unusual. It seemed everyone had something to contribute which is great to see. There are thoughts that Native trees do not make great bonsai but that is certainly **NOT** the case as was clearly demonstrated at the meeting.

Members enjoy relating the past history and expectation for their trees. Other attendees appreciate their efforts and benefit from learning about the idiosyncrasies of the many and varied examples brought along for the occasion.

There was also a short presentation by Bryan relating to preparing and displaying trees. This was especially topical as the Royal Easter Show Bonsai competition is getting close and several of our members will be exhibitors. As a follow-up to that discussion, a previously published article by Bryan on the topic will be included in this Newsletter.

That’s the positive part of this report. The “less positive” part of this report is that the Editor forgot to take any photos!!!!!!!!!!!!!! How could that happen? Not so difficult if you are one who is easily distracted. As it turns out I forgot to take my phone (camera) anyway. The joys of getting old. So, the small collage of photos from the February meeting has been “bettered” by no photos from this meeting.

My apologies to all those who brought trees along and have missed out on the opportunity of having photos of them printed in this illustrious publication.

**APRIL MEETING AGENDA
SMALL TREES**

The theme for the April meeting will be small Mame, Chohin or Kumono trees, i.e. less than 250mm tall (measured from the top surface of the soil). So bring along an example or two of your littlies.

Also, there will be a Workshop session for members so bring along a tree or two to work on. This is especially advantageous for people who would like a bit of advice on styling, etc.



Also, we are looking for trees to put on our cart at the Royal Easter Show. So if you have something interesting bring it along. Trees have to be medium/smallish in size as the cart is quite small and will only hold six or so examples. We are not looking for “Show Champions” but the unusual that will attract patrons. Surprisingly, it’s not necessarily the prize winners that catch the eye of the public.

Members are also on notice to bring their Lilli Pilli tubestocks distributed last year in for viewing at the [May meeting](#) – Dead or Alive.

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.

PREPARING A TREE FOR DISPLAY By Bryan

To prepare a tree for display remember you are trying to show it off to its best advantage - accentuate character and balance, capture the eye, and create a story.

To check styling turn away from your tree and take a quick glance back, the tree should be what you notice first; pot, stand, and any companion objects (note: separate companion planting are not allowed in the Easter Show competition) should all harmonize. Hopefully your tree is fully trimmed a month or more in advance of the show. A minor snip here or there can be done a day or so before the show but fresh cuts can stand out and detract.

The pot should be clean and match the style and shape of the tree

Try vinegar or a slightly acidic solution to clean lime or salt off. Buffing with eco/baby oil can bring a sheen to unglazed pots. You may need to use cleansing powder or soft cleanser for bad stains but be careful not to damage your pot or let the solution come in contact with soil or your tree.

In general, the more formal the tree style the more formal the pot. Less formal styles such as ‘literati’ usually are paired with informal pots. The pot should help visually balance the tree. It should not look like it may fall out or topple

Soil covering should enhance the story you are trying to convey

The soil or soil covering shouldn’t stand out or detract but rather enhance the overall aesthetic. Think of where your tree would grow naturally? Consider a dry sparse landscape for an outback tree, moss for a lush forest clearing, moss and a small fern for a tree growing near a stream or overlooking a trail leading to a hermit’s hut. Any soil covering should look natural, be cleared of unwanted weeds and reflect healthy growing conditions. Breaking up the soil covering can add interest. Moss can add an impression of age and give the impression of grass but it should be used sparingly rather than creating an undifferentiated ‘lawn’. Think of where moss is found naturally, in the tree’s shadow, at the base between the roots or between larger rocks. The same goes for gravel or small stones which should match with nature and the trees natural environment (i.e. outback red/tan).



Other ground covers can be used but they should be in proportion to the tree and not detract. Some weeds are a definite 'No'. Liverwort while low and flat should not be used as it can harm the tree by creating water logging and prevent air flow. Others, if in proportion to the tree and if they add to the story can be used, sparingly.

Rocks can add character

Rocks can be used to balance your tree's composition and placed to add character to the scene you are creating. Think rocky shoreline or rock near a small stream. When placing them remember scalene triangles are generally most aesthetic as are odd numbers.

Stands and displays

Stands and mats can help set off your tree. Stands traditionally are made from or stained dark wood (rose, cherry, etc.) but think what suits your tree best. Stands and mats can range from a formal carved wood Chinese stand to a low pile door mat cut to suit. As outlined above, the more formal your tree the more formal your stand will generally be.

While it is great to have an expensive stand for your tree, less expensive ones may work as well. This is particularly useful if showing a number of trees at once. Two Dollar shops, kitchen supply stores and (as Lee showed at our February 2022 meeting) even IGA had something that could be converted into a display.

On a recent visit to Ikea I picked up

- Bamboo table runner (\$10 - \$15) – suitable for a large tree (3)
- Door mat (\$2 or so) – this can be cut to size and shape to suit your tree (9, 10)
- Computer stand (\$15-20) – this will raise the tree around 10 cm (1)

At Kmart I found

- A small plant stand (\$15) – suitable for a small to medium cascade (2)
- An Acacia cutting board (\$15) – I will need to cut off a hole in one end (not pictured)
- Wooden serving trays with black iron legs (\$15) – standing around 10 cm high (11)

I have also used

- Flat wood cutting board or burl (6)
- Table place mats (5, 7, 8)
- Japanese tea ceremony stand (4)

Keep your eyes open as you never know when you might come across something that might work. We are replacing an old fence and I might break up a couple of palings to put together for an outback native.

Finally, as you plan your display seek to hide, minimise or obscure flaws. Inconspicuous wiring (if neat), glue, moss, rocks, fake roots even weeds are all acceptable provided they add to the overall aesthetic, enhance your tree and develop its story. Fake plastic trees, however, might be a step too far.

For more ideas on displaying your bonsai check out Wilbert Simson's article at:

<https://www.bonsaitreegardener.net/general/display>





BONSAI IN BUENOS AIRES by Bryan

Bonsai, as you know, is practiced around the world. Outside the Japanese Gardens in Buenos Aires, I recently came across a few. As a whole they were on par with many of our club trees in development. They needed refinement but had great potential.

I note these trees were for sale and ranged from around AU\$35 to around AU\$280. As such they seemed to be quite reasonably priced for their stage of development. Unfortunately importing one might be difficult.

Of most interest, I thought was the bonsai pots or the way they were displayed. Some of the pots were quite clever using rocks, sealed bits of tree stumps, etc. My favourite was the Chinese Elm on an old slate with small tiles set into the front. It brought to mind a Zen moss garden. It is also interesting to note that many are Australian natives. FYI \$1,000 (1,000 pesos) is currently equivalent to around AU\$7.15 and “No Tacar” = Do not touch.





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WHAT PEOPLE GET UP TO

Gracy Prestin was one of our members instrumental in securing our present meeting place for which we say thanks. She also has interests other than Bonsai she would like to share.

In my spare time over the last 25 years, I have been volunteering with the Australian Breastfeeding Association, as a breastfeeding counsellor, speaking to mums on a telephone Helpline on a monthly roster. It is a very rewarding as mothers are very grateful for advice in what can be a trying time.

I also help new Helpline trainees by assessing their certification assignments.

Also, in my spare time I dabble in paper quilling (This involves using a small tool to twirl thin, long papers which are glued and shaped. In card making, they are attached into the card in the desired design). I have entered quilled cards in the last two Royal Easter Show competitions and achieved 3rd Place and a "Highly Recommended" award. I entered again this year and got a 1st Prize!!



3rd Prize 2021



Highly Recommended 2022



1st Prize 2023



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 recently had their annual workshops over 24th-26th Mar 2023 – think about participating in the future. Go to nationalarboretum.act.gov.au for more details.

The Illawarra Bonsai Show is on 6th–7th May 2023. **NOTE I had the wrong dates in the last Newsletter.**
The IBS April Newsletter has a good article on Junipers as bonsai

The School of Bonsai sale on 6th May 2023 has been cancelled.

THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH by John APRIL

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

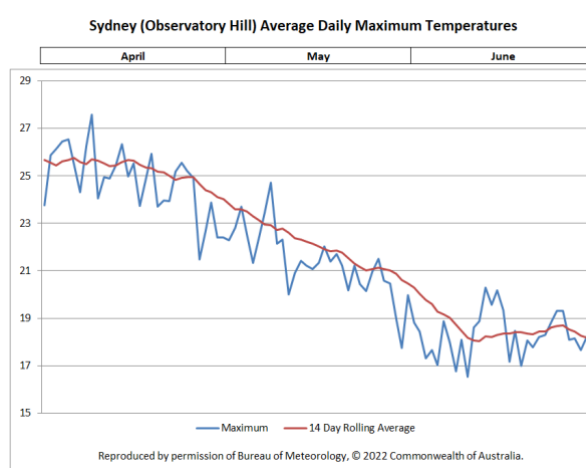
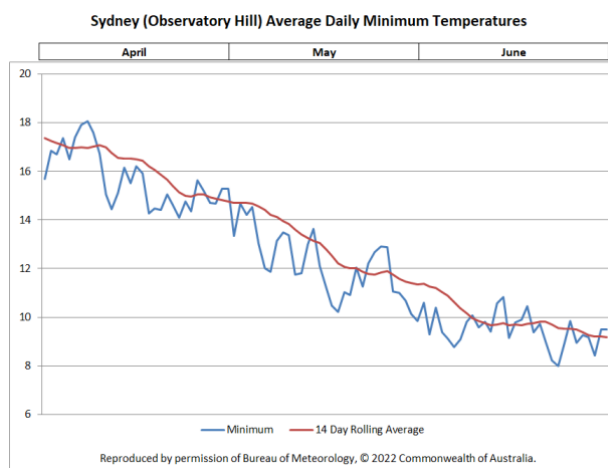
- Maintain fertilizing to make sure trees are as healthy as possible going into winter but reduce frequency as trees slow down growth. Use low nitrogen, high potassium and phosphorous fertilizers at half strength every two to three weeks. A good low N fertilizer is "blood & bone" and Epsom salts.
- Deciduous 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 into early autumn colour won't do the tree any harm but you have definitely 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.
- Repotting of all evergreens and natives including flowering Quince and Cherry, can be done now.
- Heavy branch Pruning of Pines can be done during April.
- Apply wire to [needle evergreens](#).
- As temperatures reduce, reduce the watering frequency so the soil does not stay wet.
- Take leafy semi-hardwood cuttings of Banksia now.

Sources:

AusBonsai Wiki:
"Bonsai, Its Art, Science, History and Philosophy" by D R Koreshoff
Dennis McDermott, School of Bonsai



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 6 th - 7 th May 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 6 th May 2023 CANCELLED	Visit their website – www.schoolofbonsai.com.au	Plant sale day at Nth Rocks has been cancelled
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.