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Meetings:

7.30pm third Monday night each
month, except January &
December at Gymea Community
Centre, Gymea Bay Road, Gymea,
NSW

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Well, it is not long now to our annual show and are you ready?? Ready meaning have you weeded and cleaned up the soil surface and decorated it with moss and pebbles? Is the shape of the tree in balance with the pot and do you need to remove any unwanted branches? Not only is your tree in a pot a necessity but do you have a stand, soe (accent plant) with its own stand as well? I know I keep harping on this subject but you would agree that this does make for a very pleasurable and interesting show.

A stand doesn't have to be an expensive bought one, but it can simply be a flat piece timber, stained or varnished to complement the tree and pot. Lee Wright gave us a very informative talk last month on the right stand for your pot and I hope this was all taken into your memory bank, as displaying your tree in the correct way will give our visitors a very pleasant viewing of some great trees and maybe this will entice them to take up a very rewarding hobby.

A soe is only a very small pot with a pretty flowering plant, a succulent or grasses that will enhance your display. It doesn't have to be anything over the top, just something that will enhance your own tree and complete your display. This little plant, in its small pot only needs to be on something as simple as a bamboo drink coaster or even a sushi mat. No expense needed and usually these items are found in your own home. Remember every tree needs a soe!

This is our chance to do the best display we can and to 'show-off' some of our better trees – their 'coming out' so to speak.

Another thing that you need to do is to tell and invite all of your friends and family to come along to see your handy work.

I will have more details at our next club meeting as to the times that you can deliver your trees to the venue.

Looking forward to seeing some magnificent trees in our display.

Till next time,
Brenda

FINAL THOUGHT – Exhibiting Bonsai

'Perfection is the measure of Heaven
And the wish to be perfect is the measure of man.' -Anon



HANDY HINTS

- You should be well into your winter (deciduous) repotting now and they include wisterias, crape myrtles, taxodiums (swamp Cyprus), trident maples, Japanese maples, Manchurian pears, crabapples, liquidambers, and even the humble privets. Don't be fooled by this unusual warm weather as there is still quite a bit of cold and windy weather to come.
- Had to help a friend dig up some deciduous trees the other day and to our surprise these were originally planted on top of an inverted plastic barbecue plate. When the trees were out of the ground they had the most beautiful flat root bases just ready to be put into a pot. What a great and inexpensive idea for you to do not only in your garden but even in a styrene foam box. This would work just as well.
- Collect as much moss as you can, as there is heaps out there for you to use on your trees that you are displaying in our show.
- Doing a lot of repotting of my own, I find that a lot of my trees are still very moist from the recent rains. Take care in not over watering them because they are not drying out very fast and you could risk root-rot to set in. This time of year it is quite safe not to water very often and do the 'finger test' in the soil before you water or turn on the watering system.
- Clean up around your benches as there are still a lot of fallen leaves that are decaying which hold a lot of moisture. This will enable good air circulation around the pots to stop any future fungal diseases and insect infestations like BIG red back spiders!
- Taking cuttings from deciduous trees can be done now. Make the cuttings about 6-8 inches long and place quite a few in a plastic pot with some very well drained potting mix and place in a sheltered position. Seeds from deciduous trees e.g. trident maples etc. can also be sown now in a seed tray and lightly covered with potting mix and in a few weeks they will start breaking the surface of the mix. Very exciting! – and you can share them with your friends or to get some stock ready to add to or start a new forest setting.
- Wiring can be carried out now on any tree and by the time spring has started and the sap is running the branches will hold their shape.
- It is important when repotting and if you are using the same pot, give it a good clean out and rinse thoroughly to remove any old soil, old roots that may have clogged up the drainage holes or any old ant's nests that may be lurking in the bottom. Then it is quite safe to put the prepared tree into it.

WEEKEND WORKSHOPS 2011

A reminder that the Tops Weekend Workshops are on again. This year we have two VTP demonstrators with the AABC coming for demonstrations and workshops, Andrew Ward from South Australia and Leigh Taafe from Canberra. Steve Utick, a horticulturist, will also be giving a talk during the weekend.

Woodworking in the courtyard will be occurring (as usual) and Janet Selby will also be running bonsai pottery workshops. It is sure to be another fun filled weekend. Registration forms can be downloaded from the website.

MEMBERSHIP FEES 2011/2012

It's that time of the year again. Our membership fees were due on 1 July.

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| ▪ Associate and concessional membership | \$20.00 |
| ▪ Ordinary membership | \$30.00 |
| ▪ Family membership | \$35.00 |

You can renew your membership by paying our Treasurer, Brian Wasson, at the next club meeting; or post a cheque or money order to PO Box 294, Jannali 2226, or you can use Direct Deposit to: BSB 112879, account no. 065568406, St George Bank. If using Direct Deposit please email Brian Wasson (treasurer@illawarrabonsaisociety.org) and please ensure you include your full name as a reference when paying by direct deposit.

POTOLOGY #1

By Lee Wright

Thoughts and guidelines for pot selection

A poor or inappropriate container does not condemn a bonsai to mediocrity the way bad styling does but it will surely take the edge off your hard work and make the tree look less than first rate.

Princess Beatrice's Hat

Even if you didn't see the Royal Wedding you saw and heard about Princess Beatrice's Hat. The media was full of it, wide publicity for that Dr Who costume discard. It was inappropriate for the occasion in that all you heard or saw was The Hat. Little about PB herself or her dress.. just That Hat. So what does that have to do with bonsai you ask. Too many bonsai are potted in the equivalent of PBs hat, the pot is the eye catcher, not the tree.

What tree could hope to be seen if it was in this pot? Like PBs hat, a pot of this bright hue sweeps all before it and not even the best tree would be strong enough to be seen for its own qualities. The pot's intense colour would take all the interest. Yet people buy colours like this because 'the colour is so pretty'.

At the 2003 Melbourne AABC Convention there was one tree on display that sticks in my mind long after the others have faded. It was a substantial, well styled, fig. It was in a large pot with that yellow band across the front with Chinese pictographs. The tree was on a large, rich honey coloured stand of substantial visual weight. Each item – tree/pot/stand was good but together they fought for individual attention, each being very dominant. And what won? The stand.



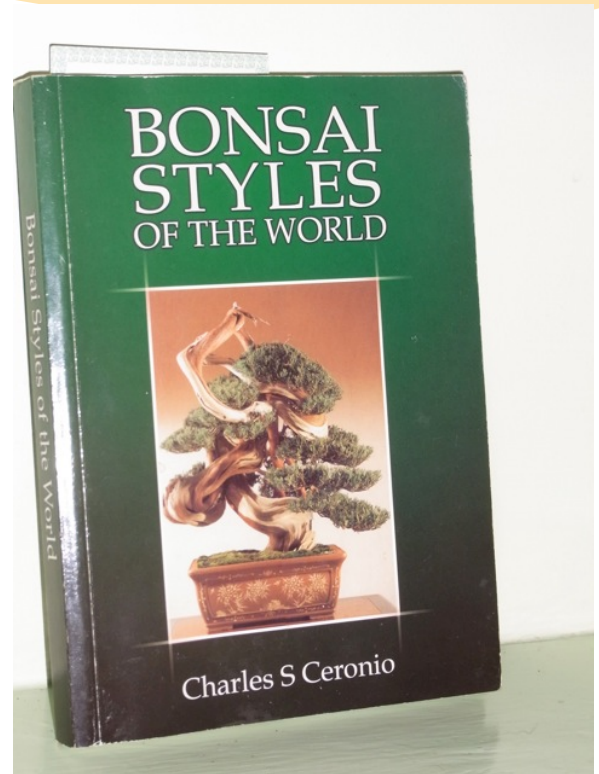
We work for months, years, decades to develop a tree that we call a bonsai. In ANY setting it is The Bonsai that should get top billing. It is The Bonsai that should get the eye first. When you look at a bonsai your eye/brain should register the three components – tree/pot/stand - as one unified unit and then see the tree. From there the pot and stand come into consideration but they must present a unified look with the tree always the dominant member. The tree is the star attraction, the pot and stand the supporting cast. All must work together to make the unified look but the tree always must have the subtle dominance. Otherwise what's the point of all your styling work?

Some people play safe and put everything in a brown unglazed pot. How many of us have gone into a shop and tried on something to find it does nothing to enhance us. It is the same with bonsai. Some bonsai are very well served by the matt brown pots, others need something more to enliven them, to bring out their best points. After all, trees may grow in brown earth but they are accentuated by grass, moss, flowers, sky, river, rocks. So it is that the choice of pots can add additional interest to a tree without calling undue attention to the container itself.

DOMINANT ASPECTS in BONSAI are horticulture and aesthetics.

Horticulturally a bonsai needs a pot that is large enough to hold the tree stable; adequate drainage to promote good roots; enough soil to hold sufficient moisture between waterings. In this context shape and colour are immaterial.

Aesthetically a pot must be sympatico with the tree, must be in a style that suits the tree and the tree must be potted in the correct position for the tree's style and characteristics and the pot's shape. Any book on bonsai will give guidelines for planting most styles. I highly recommend **BONSAI STYLES OF THE WORLD** by Charles Ceronio. This book has the advantage of succinct text, great index, a chapter per style with illustrations of a variety of trees in that style and shapes of pots that suit the style. You can't go wrong if one of your major reference books is 'Bonsai Styles of the World'



An appreciation of pots comes as your trees improve. Standard commercial containers are fine for beginners but the better the tree the better the pot should be.

The beautiful lines of brown matt Japanese pots are wonderful but the sad truth is that quality pots are hard to find on commercial shelves these days. The sharp, clear, highly defined detail of older pots has deteriorate to a slapdash making where features are indistinct, uneven, rough, not level or with an irregular surface. The variety of glazes that used to be available seems to be usurped by the single hue high gloss variety coming out of China. The avid bonsai enthusiast should always haunt private or club sales in the hopes of acquiring well made older pots.

QUALITIES of a BONSAI CONTAINER

Durability You can feel the difference between a commercial flower pot and a well made bonsai pot, the bonsai pot has a solidity that shows it will be far more resistant to chips and cracks.

Appropriate size/shape/colour for the particular bonsai

Adequate drainage

Heat/cold protection a pot should offer some insulation for the roots though few pots can successfully protect roots in temperatures above 30c - that's our job.

Ability to make a good tree very special without calling undue attention to itself.



Melaleuca alternifolia 2007 classic matt pot 2011 Mudlark Studio Pottery pot with the pot colourations simulating water with the shadow of the tree across the surface. Perfect for this tree!!

There is an important guideline for the selection of pots where the depth of the pot should be equal to the width of the trunk. Note how effective this guideline is in the Melaleuca in the Mudlark pot.

Too often this is overlooked as enthusiasts over pot their trees. Whether it is the fact that the tree fits in the pot or they are afraid the tree will dry out or the tree is in training, the pot is often too large. Over potting is fine but if a tree is in an over large pot DON'T display it. On your bench at home it's fine. But when an enthusiast puts a tree on display at a club or a show that tree should be displayed in a pot that is the correct size and shape. Anyone who exhibits is showing the public that this is the way bonsai is done and if the pot is not correct the public and especially newcomers are learning the wrong thing.

The bonsai pot influences the total look of the tree. It should emphasize and strengthen the tree's character, not contradict it. The pot should help the tree's presentation but never overshadow it. It is very important that the tree and the pot convey the same feeling.

I don't like figs in angular pots. A fig is all soft curves and roundness. To my mind a fig demands round or oval pots. Figs don't grow in rugged areas. A stout pine with a jut here and an angle there is perfect for an angular pot as the pot will emphasise the tree's character.



A Port Jackson in a very nicely made commercial pot with the pot colour picking up the yellows in the trunk and leaves of the fig and the very soft sheen keeping the pot's visual strength in balance with the tree.

When you start in bonsai a pot is a pot and getting the right size and style is hard enough. The better your trees become the more important the right pot is and the more justifiable the cost of handmade pots.

With commercial pots becoming more haphazardly made and with far more high gloss finishes, collecting handmade pots is a necessary step to improve your trees. It is a personal thing, granted, but to pot a bonsai in a pot that is highly glazed is detrimental to the majority of trees. If you love high glazed pots then start growing hyacinths or tulips where a flamboyant flower can dominate the glaze. If you have a profusely flowering azalea and like a highly glazed pot, go for a subdued colour so the tree and the flowers get the attention – not the pot.

Having said that, let me contradict it with 'The Bunyip'. Along with long established rules towards correct pot selection there also comes Artistic Waywardness. As it is no longer a hard and fast rule that red wine is for red meat and white wine for light fleshed foods, so you can flaunt the guidelines if the tree and pot go together.

The Bunyip is still two years away from public display but it didn't like being a full cascade and I only had one semi cascade pot so I put the two together and the rich bluey-red high gloss MUDLARK pot has had good feedback. The fig is round, the pot is round. The rich green of the leaves compliments the richness of the pot. In due course the foliage will be compacted and thickened and will dominate the pot with the rich red contrasting with the duller fig trunk to create a pleasing togetherness. I have defied my own guidelines and it works. The Port Jackson fig is unconventional and it works because enough components match to negate those that might not and the pot is a rich but not 'in your face' colour which modifies the impact of the high gloss.



There was a tree at the Canberra Bonsai Collection, a large, venerable olive of immense character. It was in the most beautiful high gloss embossed round Chinese pot. Both tree and pot were significant but the two didn't go together. The pot would have been perfect for a large deciduous or flowering tree while the olive needed something rougher, harsher, better reflecting the domain it would best grow in. It doesn't matter how beautiful each element is, if the two don't go together they shouldn't go together.



I won this white crazed pot on ausbonsai and I wasn't rapt in the white but I don't give MIRKWOOD pots away. I buried the pot in the garden for 3 months and in due course the ground exposure darkened one side and I put the Serissa in it. The crazed glaze gives a rocky nuance and highlights the rock the tree is growing on. When the tree is in full flower with a mass of double white flowers it is strong enough to hold its own against the pot and the two compliment each other.

If the bonsai pot must reflect the personality of the tree than one must watch out for the following mismatches: feminine tree in a masculine pot; curvy tree in a linear pot, busy tree in a busy pot, a tree overwhelmed by the colour or gloss of its pot. Overall, the two must tell the same story and share a compatibility with the tree always being the dominant character.

The same olive in a MUDLARK pot that gives an outback feeling and a pot from Erin Bonsai, Bristol UK.

Both pots suit the olive, The Mudlark has a soft sheen and broken colouration and while the Erin has a higher glaze with sparkles the duller colours serve to give the olive a sense of rugged country while the oval shape in both pots emphasizes the curves of the tree's trunk.

EVENTS


Club Meetings	
15 August 2011	Workshop and Market Place
19 September 2011	Demonstration
Club Events	
27 August 2011 – 28 August 2011	Illawarra Bonsai Society Annual Show, Sutherland District Trade Union Club, Kingsway, Gymea
16 September 2011 – 18 September 2011	12 th Annual Workshop Weekend at the Tops Conference Centre, Stanwell Tops, presented by Illawarra Bonsai Society.
Other Events	
20 August 2011 – 21 August 2011	Bonsai Society of Sydney, Annual Show, Checkers Resort - Terry Hills
9 September 2011 – 11 September 2011	Bonsai Society of Australia, Annual Show, Baulkham Hills Council Chambers - Castle Hill
15 October 2011 – 16 October 2011	Canberra Bonsai Society, Annual Show
29 October 2011	Urrimbirra Bonsai Society, Annual Show
18 November 2011 – 21 November 2011	11 th Asia Pacific Bonsai and Suiseki Convention and Exhibition, Takamatsu, Japan (www.aspac-takamatsu.jp).
26 November 2011 – 27 November 2011	Campbelltown Bonsai Society, Annual Show

Update: The Bonsai Society of Sydney have announced that their annual show on 20 and 21 August will include special guests including bonsai master Mr. Hiroyoshi Yamaji, and calligraphy by Mr Hideo Dekura. Demonstrations by Mr Yamaji will be at 2pm on Saturday and Sunday.

TREE COMPETITION – JULY 2011 RESULTS

Large	1 st	Juniper squamata	Phil Rodriques
	2 nd	Noel Summerell	Little Ruby Fig
	3 rd		
Medium	1 st	Port Jackson Fig	Lee Wright
	2 nd	Juniper squamata	Phil Rodriques
	3 rd	Juniper procumbens	Jamie Milner
Shohin	1 st	Chinese Elm	Jamie Milner
	2 nd	Buxus hollandii	Lee Wright
	3 rd	Coprosma (variegated)	Noel Summerell
Mame	1 st	Sao-tome Azalea	Lee Wright
	2 nd	Radiata Pine	Bruce Domrow
	3 rd	Port Jackson Fig	Noel Summerell
Novice	1 st	Indian Privet	Joan Harvey
	2 nd	Sargent Juniper	Paul Shergold
	3 rd	Juniper squamata	Algia Vasilou

AABC CONVENTION 2012



25th AABC National Bonsai Convention
"Be inspired"
hosted by Bonsai Northwest Inc
18 - 21 May 2012
at Rydges Hotel, Bell City, Melbourne

Featuring:
International Bonsai Master
Two Australian demonstrators
Two full days of demonstrations
Bonsai workshops
Nursery and Garden tour
Welcome Reception
Convention Dinner
Multi-prize raffles
Spectacular Bonsai Exhibition
Specialty Bonsai Sales area
Superb Venue

Boon Manakitivipart,
from USA,
Internationally recognised
bonsai artist.

Don DeLuca,
from NSW,
AABC National
Demonstrator.

Glen Bebb,
from Queensland,
AABC National
Demonstrator.

BNW Talent Team,
from Victoria,
Club members from
Bonsai Northwest.

Be inspired ... Be there!

All Convention details and a booking form can be found at the web site: www.bonsainorthwest.com.au

The 25th AABC National Bonsai Convention will be held from 18 to 21 May 2012, at Rydges Hotel, Bell City, Melbourne.

Bonsai Northwest Inc is the host club and is looking forward to welcoming your members to "Be Inspired".

We have an exciting international demonstrator – Boon Manakitivipart from America.

Don DeLuca and Glen Bebb will proudly represent Australia.

All the Convention information can be obtained from our web site:

www.bonsainorthwest.com.au

ILLAWARRA BONSAI ANNUAL SHOW

Our annual bonsai show will be held at the Sutherland Trade Union Club (The Tradies), cnr Manchester Street and The Kingsway, Gymea just around the corner from our club on the 27th and 28th August, in the Bass & Flinders room.

We would like to see a collection of good trees - well groomed, weed free, cleaned pot, complete with a bonsai stand and a soe on its own little stand or mat. After last year's convention and the superb trees that we had on display, we need to again attain the same high standard. Delivery of the trees will be on the Friday (the 26th August) after 3pm.

Please support your club's activities as a lot of hard work goes into the preparing of these functions, not only for the general public to visit, but to keep up the pride that Illawarra has been known for 40 years.

If you are intending to show trees please contact Noel or email Jamie as time has to be set aside to get the name tags for the trees printed before the actual show. We would need the common name of the tree, the botanical name (if known) and how old the tree is as normal the public always want to know how old the trees are.

In readiness, get your trees into tip top show condition and at our next meeting we will know approximately how many trees we will probably need to fill the tables.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact anyone on the committee for advice or information.

P.S. Volunteers will also be needed to help assemble, dismantle, and supervise the display during the weekend. Please keep some time aside during the weekend to help out.