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BONSAI TIMES

Bringing you the inspiration, motivation and encouragement to create remarkable Bonsai.

Cover: Buxus by Robert Allaway







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PAYMENTS

Payment should be made to NZ Bonsai Assn. Inc., Westpac Account # 03 0239 0025146 00

Please include your name/club as reference and advise the treasurer of your payment. Arthur Parks, Fees Treasurer arthurpark@xtra.co.nz

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Contact the editor if you have any queries.

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CONTACT FOR ENQUIRIES:

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I write this report the Covid Plague is still with us and predicted to reach its peak. This is having a major effect on some clubs who cannot meet at their normal meeting places and the other clubs that are able to meet are having to take special precautions.

Also at the time of writing this report the NZBA committee have elected to call a Special General Meeting (SGM) to pass two motions relating to Membership, Bonsai Times and Future Options. The SGM Zoom meeting will take place on Monday 2 May at 7:30pm. This subject has been aired previously at the AGM and in the Bonsai Times and Newsletters for many months now. The backfeed received to date from clubs and individuals is very encouraging. I am not certain if this Presidents Report will reach you before the SGM. Probably not. If not I hope that the motions presented to the SGM have been passed as I think that

they will be a big improvement on what we have at present and definitely the way forward for the NZBA committee, clubs and individual members.

Also at the time of writing there are two vital positions on the NZBA committee that need filling.

Steve who was recruited as the Fees Treasurer has due to circumstances resigned. We are therefore seeking someone to replace Steve.

We are also seeking someone familiar with Facebook and posting on Facebook to be the administrator for our NZBA Facebook page. We also want to post on Bonsai NZ.

We have found that the best way to recruit people to these positions is to shoulder tap. The people who are most likely to be able to fill these positions are probably not in receipt of the Bonsai Times nor the NZBA Newsletter. We therefore rely on people who are in receipt of these publications to have a think about people they know who might be interested and make an approach. It does not take a great effort to make an approach and you will be helping NZBA to fill two vital positions.

> Les Simpson President NZBA



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See the best trees from around the country, get the latest information from the New Zealand Bonsai Association, and see updates from NZBA affiliated clubs in one place.





9TH WORLD BONSAI CONVENTION

A virtual convention is an online event that involves people from around the world interacting in a virtual environment on the web rather than meeting in a physical location.

The 9th World Bonsai Convention includes multi-session online presentations and activities that will feature international bonsai artists. There will be interactive sessions and networking opportunities aiming to create as similar an experience as possible to a physical convention.



Mountain Hemlock by Michael Hagedorn.

All demonstrations will be pre-recorded for this event and the entire program controlled by a software program with attendant technical support staff. After the initial presentation all presentations can be played on demand up until the end of October.

Two of the international demonstrations will include a live interactive question time at the immediate completion of the demonstration. These will be for Shinji Suzuki and Michael Hagedorn. There is also a marketplace for direct access to a range of bonsai related retailers, an online auction and a global photographic exhibition of bonsai and suiseki.

The uniqueness of the Western Australia fauna that have been nurtured into bonsai trees will be on display including species that some parts of the world will have never seen before.

The 9th World Bonsai Convention will commence to be available to all registrants to view between the 8th and 31 October 2022. You will receive log in details prior to the event.

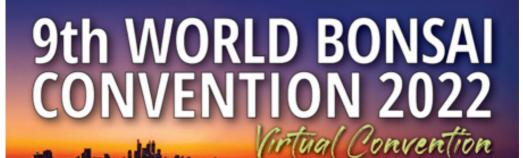
The organising committee look forward to welcoming you to the convention in October. Further details can be found at:

worldbonsaiconvention2022.com

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8 - 16 OCTOBER 2022

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BONSAI TIMES

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COMMON BOX: A LITTLE TREE THAT PACKS A PUNCH FOR BONSAI

Robert Allaway, Two Islands Bonsai

Buxus is a genus of approximately seventy species in the Buxaceae family. It's fair to say that there is a lot of exploration to be had when it comes to its bonsai cultivation. In this article we will focus on the commonly available material such as Buxus sempervirens (Common Box) and highlight its great features for bonsai and hopefully inspire more to explore this species for bonsai.

You don't have to look far to note some of its key characteristics; It's widely available, it has small leaves, it has a shallow fibrous root system with strong surface roots, it can be hard pruned and responds well, it ramifies very well, and it has hard wood for carving/ deadwood features. What more could we want?

So why don't we see more of them in the world of bonsai? I think one of the main detractors is that they are identified as slow growers. Let's unravel this a bit. It is slow to thicken up, however in terms of foliage mass addition it is not and can be quite vigorous.



One answer to this lies in almost every household's garden, - hedges! Using hedges as a source is a great place to start your bonsai journey. It provides a good size base (trunk) to build off of and importantly, it is not difficult to dig up from the ground with its shallow root system, thereby also improving success rates. Being slow to thicken could actually assist the bonsai cultivation process where we strive to produce that fine branch ramification in our trees.



Buxus hedgerows make perfect pre-bonsai material.

I was gifted a hedgerow in late June 2021 (early winter, Auckland) and after cramming them into the car and getting mud everywhere, I spent the rest of the day planting them into ordinary nursery containers.

At this point, the soil mix is a mixture of an organic mix and pumice. The key features that stood out for me early on were the lower branches, trunk character and the option to introduce taper lower down.

A key point with many styles of bonsai is the proportion of trunk thickness to tree height. There are some guidelines to work off from but generally for me it's a feeling I get. I think we need to take advantage of their key characteristics and not hold onto to those leggy branches/ trunks, but rather take the plunge and introduce taper with drastic pruning.

The tree now stands at 20cm high after a further 50-60% reduction in height. Overall, from hedge collection to styling would be about a 75% reduction. Performing the hard pruning at the time of the year when the tree is waking up for spring allows for it to recover quickly and push out new growth where you want it. You can already see some new growth on the tips of the branches.

At the time of repotting a further reduction was carried out on the root system. When handling the root system, I do not bare root. I firmly follow the Ryan Neil study of, never bare root and always leave some part untouched.



Buxus can take hard pruning well.

Therefore, the core is still field soil which at the next time of repotting will be removed and replaced with Akadama. I decided to plant the tree in 100% Akadama. At the time of repotting, the roots had not yet started growing. The tree has continued to push out new growth since early spring without issue.

As we approach the end of summer the tree has settled into its container well. The tree is living up to its name and has covered the soil surface with strong roots, with the addition of 1 or 2 trying to escape out of the drainage holes already. Since repotting I have carried out minimal pruning and only a bit of fine wiring. The focus has been on care and getting to know its needs. For a species to be explored and cultivated for bonsai it says a lot with the progress one can have in such a short period of time.

I think it is pertinent to note/ point out factors such as your climate, the health of the material, your level of knowledge etc which all play an important role in determining when or what steps can be carried out, not all need to be carried out within a short time of each other.

In conclusion I encourage you to enjoy this great species, take advantage of their strengths and be bold with your actions.



Learn more about Robert Allaway & Two Islands Bonsai Garden via: Instagram: @robert_allaway_bonsai Facebook: @RobertAllawayBonsai EUDAI 🚁 BONSAI

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Artist Samuel Brierley Eudai Studio & Bonsai School Eudaibonsai.com



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Beverley Van among her bonsai.

AN INTERVIEW WITH... BEVERLEY VAN

Part one of a miniseries of interviews taken by Kees de Jager

Beverley Van along with her late husband Alan Van are founding members of the Avon Bonsai Society of Christchurch, she is the author of the book "Growing Bonsai in New Zealand" and runs her own business 'Vanz bonsai and pottery'.

What first got you interested in bonsai?

I first became interested in growing bonsai in early 1967 after watching a demonstration by the late Peter McLay. It was shortly after that, that he donated his bonsai collection to the Botanic Gardens finding he could no longer tend them.

After his demonstration I thought. "I can do that" and dug up tree seedlings in my

garden, potted them up and declared 'bonsai!', which they (then) weren't, of course.

Many poor little seedlings later, most of them managed to survive. One is still with me and is one of my favourite trees.

How long have you been practising bonsai?

Since 1967, about 53 years.

Who would you say has been your greatest influence?

I just muddled along a bit. One thing I did do was write to Peter Chan in England and he most kindly sent me a copy of his book "Master Class". That is about all.



Do you have a favourite species to work with or style/form that you like most?

Whatever species is in front of me at any time is my favourite. But I do have a slight preference for deciduous trees (especially maples and Chinese Elm). My favourite style would be informal upright.

What motivated you to begin making pots and start your own business?

The problem I encountered early on, was the question of bonsai pots. These were a rare commodity back then – (the mid 1970's). I experimented with dishes and bowls from second-hand shops and drilled drainage holes into them. I also tried making concrete ones, (almost broke my back lifting them) and carving pumice blocks. These, I rejected as unsuitable! So, the next step was pottery classes at the Risingholme Community Centre. This opened a new world for me. From there, I joined the pottery group at the Arts Centre and later the Avice Hill Pottery Group in Memorial Avenue.

We were fortunate to find a master craftsman to make our beautiful slip cast moulds. Alan made the cascade, rectangle, square etc. pots with the moulds while I threw all the round pots on the pottery wheel.

When did you start running your classes?

At the Group's (Risingholme Community Centre) annual sales day, Alan and I put some of our bonsai pots out for sale plus a couple of bonsai. A number of people remarked that "yes, they had tried growing bonsai, but they all died". So much interest was shown in the trees and pots that the director of the Craft Centre invited Alan and me to run beginners' classes at the Centre.

The first class was in 1992, with just five pupils. The next step came when it became apparent that the six weeks course wasn't enough for these five pupils so we had a meeting together to form the Avon Bonsai Society.

Word spread quickly and our group of five swelled so fast that we outgrew the

Avice Hill rooms and made the move to the Isleworth School.

How do you feel that bonsai has changed in the time that you have been doing it? For better or worse.

There are far more people involved with bonsai nowadays and far more people actually know what they are.

Apart from people being more aware of what they are, bonsai are much as they have always been. However, there are certainly more opportunities for people to learn to grow bonsai than there once was.

Do you keep up to date with the wider global bonsai scene?

Not to any great extent. Bonsai and the love of them is a universal thing and I do hear from other growers from time to time.

Have you travelled overseas to see how bonsai is practised in other countries?

When I went overseas for a family-related trip I kept a look out for bonsai but saw very few. I didn't consciously go looking for them. Maybe next time.

Do you think that having a passion for bonsai has helped you during your life and if so in what way?

Having a passion for bonsai has taught me patience, leading me to observe the trees in our Christchurch gardens and parks (I lived opposite Hagley Park as a child). Also kindness especially regarding other people's trees. We are all, always, forever learners - striving to grow the 'perfect' bonsai!

Can you tell me a bit about your book, what inspired you to write it, did you have help, etc?

When Alan and I ran our classes, we gave out a set of notes on each evening's class. When I came to think that a book would be a good idea, I used those six sets of notes as a guideline for the book. So far it is proving to being very well received.

Do you have any advice for others who practise bonsai both beginners or more experienced?

The advice I offer is, "give bonsai growing a try". Ask for advice if you don't know how to proceed. When working on a



tree's styling, "measure twice and cut once" Once the branch is cut off it is too late to change one's mind. If you like what you have done, come back later and see if you still like it. "The tree you are working on has taken some years to grow. Don't be hasty with it, take your time."

What is one tool, technique, or piece of knowledge which you have found invaluable?

Work on your patience and be ready to listen to advice. You don't have to follow it but do listen.

Do you have a prediction for how bonsai both in NZ and globally may evolve going forward?

Bonsai is an ancient art said to have started in China, perhaps over 1,000 years ago, there is no good reason after all this time for it to have changes. "It is what it is".

If someone reading this wanted to get in touch with you what would be the best way?

Anyone can contact me through my website: **pots4bonsai.com**



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WAYNE MCLAY 11 OCTOBER 1955 - 5 MARCH 2022

Words by Tony Bywater

New Zealand Bonsai lost part of its history in early March when Wayne Richard McLay passed away after a short illness.

Wayne was a founding member and long-time secretary and newsletter editor of the South Canterbury Bonsai Society in Timaru. He was also the grandson of Peter McLay from Christchurch, the first New Zealander of European descent to grow bonsai in New Zealand.

Peter spent time in an English hospital recovering from being gassed during WWI. Lying next to him in hospital was a young Japanese man, also recovering from his injuries and once they were able to walk a little in the garden, they discovered a mutual interest in plants and horticulture. The young Japanese man told Peter of the bonsai trees growing at his family home in Japan. Together they talked about root pruning and branch shaping and this sowed the seed for Peter's life-long passion with bonsai.

After his return to NZ in 1919, Peter started growing bonsai with whatever was available to him at the time and over the years developed a collection of over 800 trees in his garden in Christchurch. Always keen to pass on his experience to others, he gave lectures to the Horticultural Society and numerous other



clubs, and hosted many school visits to his home. Peter was a founding member of the Christchurch Bonsai Society in 1968 and some years later when he felt too old to look after his trees properly, he gifted most of his collection to the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. It was housed in the Peter McLay House and was one of the few public bonsai collections in New Zealand, now sadly diminished through attrition, theft, and the ravages of earthquakes.

Wayne followed in his grandfather's footsteps; he had an absolute passion for plants and horticulture and established not only a bonsai collection of his own, including some of his grandfather's trees, but large collections of orchids and succulents as well at his home in Timaru. After completing a Diploma in Horticulture, he was employed by the Timaru City Council, and later District Council, first planting and looking after roadside plots and later – when he got fed up with that and said he wanted to work at the Botanic Gardens – as a gardener and latterly education officer for the gardens. He worked for the gardens for over 40 years and only retired six months ago.

Along with David Belcher, Ralph and Silvia Lillico and their son Bryce, Wayne attended an informal meeting in 1979 to talk about the formation of a bonsai club in Timaru and the following year, the South Canterbury Bonsai Society was born. Wayne has been an active supporter of the SCBS ever since and has filled a number of roles in the club, most notably as secretary and newsletter editor, but more generally as the "go-to" person for anything to do with NZBA and other clubs around the country.

A keen photographer, he was also a member of the Timaru Photography Club and took pictures of everything – except himself of course. An active member of the Timaru Horticultural Society, The Friends of the Timaru Botanic Gardens, the South Canterbury Orchid Society and the Succulent Society, Wayne's passing came as a sad shock to his many friends and acquaintances in Timaru and throughout NZ.



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BONSAI TIMES

PROJECT PROFILES: A LITTLE MINISERIES SHOWCASING A CLUB MEMBER'S CURRENT WORK

Steve Palmer from South Canterbury

In 2013/14, this Chamaecyparis was removed from Steve's pond feature in a newly purchased garden. He then had it potted into a large tub for recovery.

Now, skip to April 2021, where it was then taken to a South Canterbury Bonsai Society workshop with the lovely Joy Morton. Standing at 110cm tall from the top of the pot, his goal was to reduce height by a quarter. Together they removed the top with shari and jin added, wired some heavy branches and finally let it rest for another year. April 2022, with the wires now being pulled down further and a full rewire added the apex is starting to take shape. This beautiful Chamaecyparis now stands 80cm tall from the top of the pot.

It's great to see the fantastic results the workshops can bring! Please feel free to email us to showcase what projects you have been up to over autumn at **nzbamag@gmail.com**.



2013/14

April 2021

April 2022



Monthly Meetings Sunday Workshops NZBA Demonstrators Free styling advice

Contact us. First meeting is free!

ABS Club President: Matt Hutson Email: aucklandbonsaisociety@gmail.com Facebook: Auckland Bonsai Society Web: Auckland Bonsai Society Google sites.

Fern Valley Bonsai Nursery

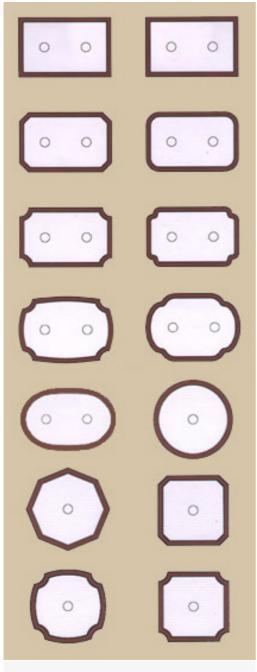
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Standard bonsai pot shapes.

FROM THE ARCHIVES: GET POTTED

Peter Mudie

This article was previously published in Bonsai Times Volume 5, Issue 2, April - June 2011. Some images have been updated.

At this time of year, we have begun thinking about Spring and the work ahead. The planning can start now by cleaning and preparing your pots. One of the most difficult decisions you have to make with your prized tree is "What pot should I put it into?"

In choosing the 'right' pot for your tree, there are a number of factors you have to consider. The clues for making the right choice are all provided by the tree itself, it's up to you to interpret the clues to make the right choice.

Bonsai pots are usually made from clay which has been fired at a high temperature to make it frost proof (generally called stoneware). Although there are other materials which can be used including:

- natural materials such as rock or wood
- plastic
- resin
- cement
- fiberglass
- · a combination of the above.

The finish on a ceramic pot can be unglazed (showing the natural colour of the fired clay) or have either a gloss or matte glaze. Pots can be decorated or plain.

Conventional bonsai pots are based on either a rectangle or circle with modifications to the corners, such as rounded corners or concave corners to give a variety of shapes.

There are specific shapes of pots for more specific styles of bonsai, such as cascade, semi-cascade, slab, crescent (or moon), drum, primitive (or free-form).

POT SHAPE

When looking for the right shape, you need to consider how 'Masculine' or 'Feminine' your tree is. Masculine trees tend to have a thick trunk, heavy branches, give an impression of power,



are angular, and have a rugged bark. Feminine trees are slimmer, have fine branches, give an impression of being delicate, have a rounded shape and a smooth trunk.

You will find both masculine and feminine features in your tree, its the degree of masculinity or femininity which guides you to your choice of pot shape. Masculine trees tend to have squarer pots and feminine trees tend to have rounder pots.



The style of your tree also has a bearing on the shape of pot. Literati trees are usually in a round pot with a diameter less than a third the height of the tree (try to choose a pot that the top of the tree would look good in). Landscapes and groups tend to be in a low pot or on a slab. Cascades and semi-cascades are usually in a square or round pot.

POT SIZE

When looking for a pot, we need to make sure it doesn't overpower the tree, the pot should compliment the tree and not draw your eye away from it.

To get the right size, we need to consider the size of the tree. In general, the pot width (A) should be two thirds of the tree height or width (B).

The depth of the pot (C) should be equal to the width of the trunk at the of point where the root flare ends (D).



Changes in the pot features.

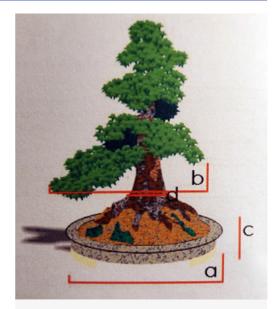


Diagram for calculating proportions.

For cascades or semi-cascades, the pot width should be about half the span of the tree, and its depth no more than half the height of the tree.

When looking at a tree and pot together, they should have the same 'optical weight' - namely for a tall delicate tree, we should have a pot that looks light, a heavy tree should have a heavy looking pot.

This 'optical mass' for the pot should be about one third of that tree. If you have the right size of pot, you can alter the look of the pot by choosing a pot with a curved side.

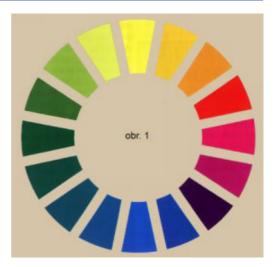
Adding a lip also increases the optical weight whilst curving the sides in decreases the optical weight.

POT COLOUR

When choosing a colour for the pot, look at all the colours in the tree (bark, foliage, flowers and fruit) and either choose a colour similar to those you have found, or use the colour wheel to find a contrasting colour. For example, many red maples are shown in a blue pot. Conifers are usually shown in pots with earthen colours, browns or greys.

EXCEPTIONS

When choosing your pot, you should always be aware some trees will need bigger pots than the guidelines suggest, because they are drought intolerant, do not like root disturbance, or are more subject to temperature intolerance.



Editor's Addition: Which of the pots below would you choose?



Okatsune Bonsai Scissors

Established in the 1940's, Okatsune are a Japanese manufacturer of high quality secateurs, snips and hedge shears, and also a beautiful range of Bonsai scissors. Their tools are made from special high grade forged carbon steel and are uniquely heat treated, tempered and precision ground to produce incredibly sharp blades that keep their edges longer. Okatsune have 3 key points to their success;

> Razor Sharp. Okatsune tools are razor sharp because the steel of the blades have a very high hardness, and this keeps the blades sharp for a long time, giving a clean and precise cut.

> > 2 - Simple. Okatsune tools only consist of a few parts which ensures high stability and ease of use, and they're light-weight and require very little maintenance.

3 - Robust. Okatsune tools are very robust, which allows them to cut through branches without you having to worry that the tool will give way or break.

Okatsune have two styles of tools in this range - Bonsai and Ikebana.

Bonsai scissors are ultra-lightweight and designed for the accurate shaping and maintenance of your Bonsai. This range includes the traditional large handle scissors with short pointy blades, and the narrow scissors with long blades which help with precision pruning.

Ikebana scissors are designed for the Japanese art of flower arranging.

There are several models available in each style.

For more information go to www.silkystore.co.nz and visit the Okatsune page or phone 03 547 6874.



NZBA MEMBERS GALLERY

Readers are invited to send photos of their trees for publication in The Gallery to the editor at nzbamag@gmail.com. Photos may be single photos of a tree, or sets of the same tree for example in different seasons, or at different stages of development.

Please include the common name of the tree, its height and number of years in training. Owner's full names will not be published to protect your security.



Pine - Martin



Blue Juniper - Aaron



Juniper Hollywood/Kaizuka – Martin



Azalea - Aaron



Juniper Procumbens - Rob



Juniper Procumbens - Rob



Pohutakawa - Rob

CLUBS

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President: Matt Hutson aucklandbonsaisociety@gmail.com Secretary: Ross Phillips

Meetings: 2nd Thursday 7:30 pm, Auckland Horticultural Council, 900 Great North Road, Western Springs, Auckland.

AVON BONSAI SOCIETY

President: Jane Bodle cluckmed@yahoo.com Secretary: Alison McIntosh alisonmc99@gmail.com 2/15 Celia Street, Sumner, Christchurch.

Meetings: 2nd Monday, 7.30 pm, The Kiosk, Christchurch Botanical Gardens, Rolleston Ave, Christchurch.

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Meetings: last Sunday

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John Simpson - 029 4783 464 Rod Wegener - 021 755 100 Ainsley Vincent - 03 5728335

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Meetings: 2nd Wednesday, 7:30 pm, Cotswold Preschool, Colesbury Street, Bishopdale, Christchurch.

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President: Sam Brierley - 07 307 8483 eudaimoniabonsai@gmail.com 18 Rambler Drive, Whakatane

Meetings: 1st Sunday pm, phone for details.

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Gerry Boy - 021 0236 1499 gerry2013@yahoo.co.nz

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Meetings: 3rd Saturday or Sunday after. Phone for details of time and venue.

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Meetings: 2nd Sunday 2.00pm, St Francis Church Hall, 92 Mansel Ave, Hamilton

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President: Eugine Ferreira, 021 0248 8887 Secretary: Paula Rowe - 027 354 1312

Meetings: 7.00pm, 2nd Monday, Location varies , email kapitibonsai@gmail.com or message Facebook group to confirm.

KENZO BONSAI

President: Martin Walters - 021 629 192 enquiries@walterselectrical.co.nz Secretary: Sarah Walters 021 917 086 sarahc74@hotmail.com

Meetings: 1 st Sunday of the month, Chatswood, Auckland

MANAWATU BONSAI

President: Greg Tuthill manawatubonsai@gmail.com **Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday, 7:00 pm, PN Community Leisure Centre, 569 Fergusson Street, Palmerston North

NELSON BONSAI CLUB

President: Mark Poulter - 021 261 3329 mpoulter14@gmail.com 55 Templemore Drive, Richmond, Nelson.

Meetings: 1st Monday, 7:30 pm, members house (Apr to Aug); Stoke Garden and Landscapes, 59 Saxton Road (Sept to Mar).

NEW PLYMOUTH BONSAI CLUB INC.

President: Stuart Skene stuartsk.20@gmail.com Secretary/Treasurer: Nicola Stevenson nicola@omahanui.co.nz - 027 464 2022

Meetings: last Sunday, 1:30pm, The Royal New Zealand Foundation for the Blind, 131 Vivian Street, New Plymouth.

OTAGO BONSAI SOCIETY

President: Lynn Slobbe - 03 453 4551 Secretary: Jo Douglas bonsaiotago.obs1@gmail.com

Meetings: 1st Tuesday, 7:30 pm, Mercy Hall 42 Macandrew Road, South Dunedin, Dunedin.

ROTORUA BONSAI CLUB

President: Selwyn Hatrick - 07 348 5353 selwyn_h@slingshot.co.nz Secretary: Rick Merrington rick@gargoyles.co.nz - 07 347 4065

Meetings: 2nd Sunday, phone for details

SOUTH CANTERBURY BONSAI SOCIETY

President: Dave Geddes - 027 616 0172

Meetings: 1st Wednesday, (February to November), 7:30pm, Arts Centre, Gleniti Road, Timaru.

WELLINGTON BONSAI CLUB

Secretary: Brenda Cooper PO Box 30-621, Lower Hut 5040 info@bonsai.org.nz

Meetings: 1st Sunday (except January), 1:00 pm, Hutt Valley Tramping Club rooms, Philip Evans Reserve, Birch Street, Waterloo, Lower Hutt

NZBAMAG@GMAIL.COM WWW.BONSAINZ.COM FACEBOOK.COM/BONSAINZ

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