



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION  
OF NZBA

# BONSAI TIMES



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## **Rotorua Bonsai Club**

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## From The President

By the time you all read this the festive season will just about be on us. How this year has flown by, they seem to be going faster every year.

Unfortunately it is sad news once again for us in the bonsai world with the passing of another of our stalwarts from New Plymouth, bonsai artist Leo Jury. Leo was a major part of the New Plymouth Club for many years and an excellent artist. I will always remember the hospitality that Leo showed me the time that I stayed with him. Fortunately I was given the chance to purchase some of Leo's trees several years ago, these are now some of the best trees in my collection, and the early work done on them will never be forgotten. Leo will be sadly missed by us all.

We are well into spring now and it is great to see the new growth on our trees and the way this year has gone it will soon be into autumn colour.

Next years convention is not that far away and I would encourage all members to think about attending Dunedin in March. It will be a great weekend.

Many thanks to the clubs and members that replied to our NZBA survey. It has given us a few insights into what clubs and members want.

Once again I would ask members and clubs to make sure you get articles into our editor (over a year all clubs should have something to write about) and also we are always needing good photos for the website, but these have to be well taken and please watch the background.

Finally a great festive season to all.

Lindsay





***BONSAI TIMES***  
***brings you the***  
***inspiration,***  
***motivation and***  
***encouragement***  
***to create***  
***remarkable***  
***bonsai***





# BONSAI TIMES

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**Workshops** are one of the best tools to use to learn bonsai. This form of learning environment gives the student an opportunity to work with the many talented bonsai artists within New Zealand and, if you are fortunate enough, from around the world on a one on one basis. This personal tuition on your chosen tree can be both rewarding and revealing. The workshop allows for open communication. It is a great opportunity to ask questions and share any learning that you have. In an open workshop this can extend to the other participants, their input and encouragement, observing their struggles and listening to their conversations can make a large contribution to your own learning. The fastest developing fashion in the workshop environment is the observer. Or, as I would rudely say, those who don't have the courage to put themselves on the line. As an observer you have a great opportunity to gain knowledge from someone else's courage. Even though the learning is still present the hands on experience is lost as well as the chance to develop one of your trees. I understand that being an observer cannot be avoided at times. I myself have taken this path on several occasions, especially when visiting overseas conventions and cannot work on a tree that I can take home. Therefore I would still like to stress how rewarding the workshop can be and is to be embraced at every opportunity.

We have been fortunate recently in having Peter Adams visit New Zealand. After a negative response from clubs within this country to support a teaching tour arranged by NZBA, Hamilton Bonsai Club who hold teaching workshops every year, decided to go ahead anyway and within these pages share their amazing experiences. Opportunities like this do not happen often and should be grabbed with open arms. It is sad that a teacher of this calibre was dismissed under the usual range of excuses—time, cost, fear and being bothered. Total shame.

There have been a number of activities around the country in recent months and it is great that clubs have chosen to share them on the following pages. I want to thank those of you who took the time to contact me recently and give your support for the magazine, provide encouragement and, most importantly, articles. This magazine is for your enjoyment and the sharing of knowledge, skills and information. A bit like taking part in workshops. I am totally reliant on you providing your support as this is your magazine.

Have a great Christmas!

*Dianne*



# PETER ADAMS WORKSHOP

## Peter Adams

has been working with bonsai for over fifty years. Starting in the United Kingdom he ran a successful bonsai nursery for thirty years and over a period of forty years built a world class collection, winning Gold at Chelsea. He was an advisor and teacher on bonsai to the Royal Horticultural Society too. Over the years he has published eleven books on bonsai and is a regular contributor to the Bonsai Focus magazine.

In the mid 1990's Peter moved with his wife Kate (a bonsai artist in her own right) to the United States where he now works. Utilising his talents as an artist (he has a post-graduate degree in painting from the Royal Academy Schools in London), Peter combines his love of bonsai and drawing when he works with trees.

The Hamilton club were approached by Clinton Nesci to see if we would like to host Peter and Kate during his last demonstrating tour of Australia being organised by Clinton. Approaching several clubs and the NZBA we found that outside of the Hamilton club there was some interest in having workshops with Peter but the numbers were not large enough to justify flying Peter and Kate all over New Zealand. The Hamilton Club decided this was an opportunity not to be missed so we arranged to have Peter and Kate come over and run workshops in Hamilton.

Friday saw seven people turn up for the Design Workshop. Here Peter makes a drawing of how he sees the tree developing. This is discussed with the owner who then starts working on the tree. At the end of the day the tree is photographed by Kate. Back in the USA Peter will produce frameable quality artwork showing the tree as well as design notes discussing how the tree should be developed to produce the finished bonsai. This will be sent back to the tree owner.



The trees that came on Friday were the large *Chamaecyparis* which Robert Steven worked on at the 2010 Convention, a Totara, a pine forest, a large upright juniper, a large black pine, a root over rock maple and a cascade juniper. Some of these trees underwent a dramatic change of direction whilst others were subjected to more subtle changes.

Friday was finished off with a pot luck supper with some of those who attended the workshop. A sunny Saturday morning saw Peter run a more conventional workshop for seven people at the Waikato Potters Society where he discussed the trees with their owners before they started working on them.



As part of the process of discussing the trees, Peter produced drawings showing his vision for the tree. The trees included cedar, picea, ligustrum, juniper, celtis, white olive and hornbeam. Later on in the afternoon Peter discussed several techniques including how to get the best results when cutting down a large trunk and how to create the impression of age and texture in a jin or shari.



Sunday saw only six turn up for the workshop. Sunday differed slightly in that there was a novice in the group. Peter spent some time with her discussing how to develop the mugo pine she had brought along. The other trees were further along

in their journey and included a couple of large deodar cedars, a celtis, and a couple of junipers. Again Peter produced drawings for the proud owners to take away. Once again everyone went away with some very nice trees and a lot of information courtesy of Peter's relaxed, informal style of teaching.

To allow as many people to take advantage of Peter and Kate's expertise the club allowed observers to come along on the Saturday and Sunday workshops. Despite sending out invitations to all the clubs in the North Island only two clubs





showed any interest in taking part in the weekend.



**Left:** A 'Peter Adams' drawing of a Juniper

**Above left:** Ready for action

**Above right:** Getting down and dirty with a Celtis



**Above:** Discussing a Cedar with Noel Plowman

**Right:** Back to basics – discussing how to start a tree from scratch







**Left:** *Kate watches Peter drawing a Juniper*



**Below:** *Sandra Quintal getting feedback*

# Words from the brave

## X Media Blaauw



I first set eyes on this tree in 2004. It was in a bag at the Blue Mountain Nursery in Tapanui. It had been dug straight out of the ground and was largely untouched. I was doing a course at the time with Joy Morton and she took me there to get some trees to work on. The tree experienced its first workshop two days afterwards. A significant amount of material was removed. It almost needed a chain saw.

I have worked on it ever since. I initially placed it in a mica pot. However I purchased a reasonably large impressive clay pot in Auckland. It remained content in this pot for a year or two until I took it to one of the Hamilton Bonsai Shows. After the show I took it home on the trailer. Unfortunately it suffered a bump too many and the pot shattered into a number of large pieces by the time I reached home. As a consequence it has gone back into a mica pot and has remained there ever since.

***From the Hamilton Bonsai Club  
Exhibition October 2009***





I have done considerable work on the jins and foliage pads. It was critiqued at the last Hamilton Convention by Robert Steven. His observation was mainly that the foliage pads were too pom-pom like and they needed to be roughed up more, with more undulation around the edges to replicate how a tree would grow naturally.

Although these trees are slow growing the foliage is one of the main attractions as far as I am concerned.



Peter Adams took some time to study the tree. His main observation was that it looked too young. He drew a picture of how he saw the tree growing in future. The height was shortened. The branches and apex were wired and shaped to give an appearance of an older tree. They were curved, dropped and spread to give this appearance. The request was made to let the main side branches extend in future. The branches were wired. Funny how wiring seems to be the thing you do most of at any workshop. Reshaping the branches and foliage resulted in a dramatic improvement to my eyes.

### ***Les Simpson***



## BLACK PINE BONSAI BEGINNINGS



A visit to Noel Plowman's and a wander around his back yard to check on a few trees still to be cleared. Black Pine in polystyrene bean boxes....been there ages....natural pruning by the cattle on the edge of the paddock, and well rooted.

This one looks good, with a natural curve in the trunk and well grown nebari. Here's a few bucks and we'll see how we get on.

Back home, the roots were checked and pruned and the tree was repotted into a flat and wide wooden box, basic wiring, and the centre candles removed. We'll leave it till next year. Noel visits

a few weeks later, a glass of nectar and well.....sold that too cheap....and then the plan is hatched.

A wonderful opportunity, Peter Adams is coming to visit New Zealand and direct workshops here in Hamilton. His opinion on the Black Pine would be the beginning of something grand. Not only did he inspire me with direction on the tree, but also the pot. Initial pruning and wiring was carried out at his workshop session in Pirongia, and his ideas for shape and colour of the pot will hopefully be created by....yes, you guessed....Noel.

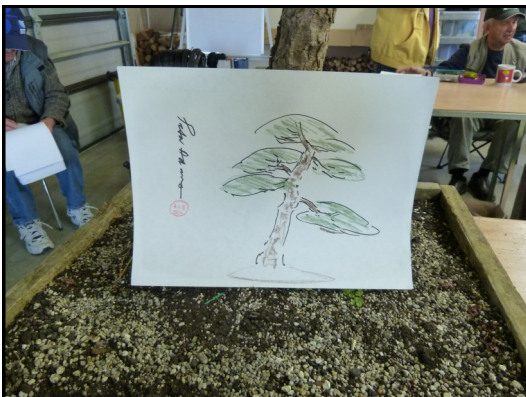
A wonderful joint effort for what will be an ongoing and challenging project.



The Black Pine will need some structural pruning at the right time, is presently wired for initial shaping, and I look forward to the design and artwork from Peter Adams on which we will base its future.

A huge thank you to Peter for his knowledge and opinions, and to Noel for his tree.

**Peter Scammell**





## THE JUNIPER

The juniper that I worked on at the Peter Adams design workshop is either a San Jose juniper or one of the original species juniper that were around twenty or thirty years ago.

This tree started as a cutting in Dunedin taken by one of the early members down there, Anna. I believe she started three of these at the time at least twenty-five years ago, the thing that made this tree appealing to me was first of all the shape that was put into the tree in the early years, and

as a result of that it is why this ended up a very desirable tree to have to style. I came across this tree when I had the opportunity to run a weekend workshop for the Otago Club about three and a half years ago.

Anna brought the tree to the workshop to work on and for ideas, the end result was I purchased this tree off her and first of all took it back to Christchurch, then when I moved to Auckland brought it up with me.

I looked at this tree for three years before I started to do any work on it and at that stage I jinned all the branches on one side and had a plan in my mind of what I felt the end result would be.

I did not say much to Peter when he started to look at the tree and do his design, but the end result would be 98% at least of what I had planned.

The final tree will be a lot different to what I would have done at the time of the Dunedin workshop so I feel a lesson learnt is to take your time and study the tree. I am glad that I did as I will have a much better tree long term. There's still at least five years more development, maybe ten, but I feel the end result will be worth it.



*Lindsay Muirhead*





### ***Marshall Gray gives her view on an outstanding experience***

The weekend workshop in August with Peter Adams was great! He had a variety of trees (most of us brought two) and participant experience levels to work with. We were each dealt with care, and good humour with lots of tips and suggestions from his years of experience and expertise.

He looked carefully at each tree, discussed its strong and weak points and made suggestions to do with it. Then he drew a sketch of what the tree could look like in time if these changes of style, placement, etc. were made. Of those who chose to follow these suggestions it would be very interesting in the future to compare development in the trees with these sketches. These sketches also make a great keepsake!

For some trees he suggested subtle changes, others quite radical. My hackberry that I really liked as it was coming along is now having its top air-layered (thank you Sandra). I was expecting to be shown some minor changes in style but without the top a whole new placement appeared, an aspect that never occurred to me to consider. I can now see the tree becoming even more special to me. Others have been wired in drastically different directions, good sized branches hit the floor, some were just tweaked here and there.

All of the workshops I have been able to attend have been inspiring, and this one especially so. To see "new" trees emerging as they are worked is always a buzz. Looking from the tree, whatever its current state and comparing it with the sketch of what could be, gave me a more clear direction of stages of development. Different demonstrators have essentially said similar things, as well as offering their own specialties of interest and aesthetics but for some reason, what Peter projected really clicked with the bonsai files in my brain.



## THE TOTARA by Jeff Richards

**Jeff attended the Friday Design Workshop along with seven other brave artists. This is his take on the experience.**



For once I was the first to arrive at an event. Peter Scammell was the second – I'd passed him when he stopped to buy his lunch. This was on the Friday, the first day of the Peter and Kate Adams Long Weekend. The Friday event was held at Ann and Peter Mudie's in Pirongia, whilst the rest of the weekend was at The Potters' Society in Hamilton.

There were seven of us on the day, and we all thought that we would be sitting around drinking tea and coffee, eating, being advised on what to do with our prized trees, and maybe give them a wee tweak here and there. However, this was not to be, as some of the trees left the Mudie residence looking quite different from when they first entered the scene. They were cut about a bit and quite well wired - nothing less than matchstick size and nothing green – good, that's the way I like it! In general we got plenty of good advice, several options, a drawing - which we lost, but will be returned with a small portfolio on Peter's views of the future shape of the tree.

This session was very interesting, as well as intense, as we each had only one tree to concentrate and work on. There was also plenty of time available to hear what Peter, and sometimes Kate, said about other people's trees. My tree was a Totara. This was the only New Zealand native tree that Peter was presented with over the weekend, which was one of several I collected from Takaka in 1995. I have had it in a pot for several years so it does need fattening up. I now have a better idea of what to do with the tree, and what pot that it should be transferred into. By the end of the weekend Noel must have had requests for about thirty pots, as many of the colours and designs are not readily available here in New Zealand.

Like Nobu, one of Peter's mantras is not to overdo the work done on a tree at any one time. In particular don't do major work on the top and re-pot at the same time or you will overstress and possibly kill the tree. Also, use the trees' assets rather than stomp all over them – i.e. let the tree guide you to its desired shape and form. We finished up the Friday with an enjoyable pot luck dinner at Ann and Peters home.





**Here Jeff continues the story, sharing the rest of the weekend's activities.....**

Saturday at the Potter's Society – there were seven participants and six observers. Once again, all were as keen as mustard with an excellent variety of trees just waiting to be styled. I brought along an atlas cedar which I have had in a bag for a good few years - the trick will be to get it out of its bag without killing it! In that aspect, cedars and I are not very compatible – I have probably killed more cedars than any other species. This includes my prize winning Vision to Reality

tree from several years ago!

Once again I had to wire most of the tree (I always seem to fall for that one!), but there wasn't too much to wire and, as an added bonus, I didn't have to cut too much off! This tree will end up as a tall elegant typical cedar. I am really looking forward to seeing it potted up in a few years. Saturday was a good day in that most of us had brought along fairly simple trees and we were able to actually work on two trees. This was excellent as we were able to cover a wide variety of trees and glean loads of information when we had time to break from our own trees.

My second tree was a pine, a sort of literati, ex the Napier/Taupo Road, which I have had for a few years, taken to a few workshops and was still unsure of what to do with it. I feel that we (the tree and I) are now on the right track after a reasonable amount of wire and "a bit off the top". I am often unsure of when to put a stop to the length of a branch or trunk, thus they often end up too long and straggly!

On Saturday night a group of us went to Gengy's Mongolian BBQ Restaurant, where you "pick and mix" your own food, add a few oils and spices, and they cook it for you. They have a couple of different soups and rolls as starters, and pancakes and ice cream at the end all for just under \$30!





Sunday dawned - another day and another team of participants (6) and observers (7). It would have been nice to have had a few more faces along at each session, but them's the breaks! Once again we had good trees from beginners to mature, as were the participants. This time I watched and listened so I will try to pass on some of the points that we picked up along the way:

Most of the work on the trees was done with hand tools but some power equipment was discussed and used. Apparently small battery chain saws are available, and if used correctly are "safe!" An Arbortech cutter was used to carve the top of one of the trees. This ma-

chine successfully removed quite a bit of material quickly and relatively neatly. It was done outside as it was rather messy.

The colour of the foliage depends upon the amount of light (UV to infrared) that it gets. In general excess light leads to lighter foliage; dappled light gives darker foliage. In light of this fact, it is possibly better to position your trees so that they are not in full sun all day.

When wiring, the idea is more important than the technique, as it is only temporary and only you have to look at it before it comes off.

If branches will not set, peel off a small strip of the bark where you want to place the bend, wire the branch into the correct shape/position and the bark strip will regrow and hold the branch in the desired position. Remove the wire once the branch has set.

Needle cast on pines can be active in the summer. This is where the needle is spangled in the middle (small brown band around the middle of the needle). It is best to keep the top of the tree as dry as possible. Cure/prevent with copper sprays, and remove and burn infected needles.

Winter oil is a good preventative/curative for many of the bugs on our trees – don't water on the day before, on, or after spraying the oil.

Black and sometimes mugo pines will grow from cuttings – use a rooting compound and add some alcohol - ethanol (about 1%) – make sure that you dunk it in in your Scotch before you put it in the rooting compound!!

When creating jins use diluted Indian ink or lamp black water colour paint to darken the area (just after you have made the jin), this will mix with the gum from the tree and look quite natural, it may have to be repainted occasionally.

"If you want it, buy it dinner first" – i.e. feed it, then leave it for a year or so before you do any major work on it.

The "F Word" – i.e. **Front**. There is not really an exact front to your tree. Your tree is a whole - it is a 3D living, breathing entity, not a cardboard cut-out.

Graft on small plants to the "fat bits" for roots.

Don't have pots and rocks that are too flash, or they take the focus off the tree.

The wider a trees foliage the shorter it appears, the narrower its form the taller it appears.



To stop the bark rolling in across the face of a shari, drill inwards along the edge of the bark. This will "kill" the growing edge and stop the inward growth – it is not permanent and will have to be repeated every so often.

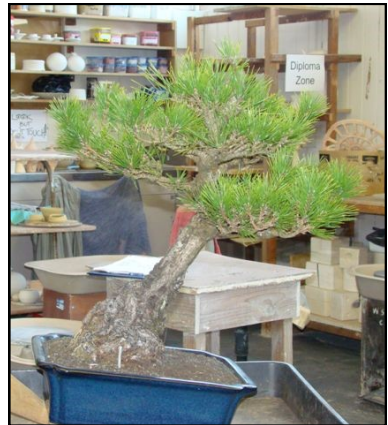
Stand well back from your tree to get the total picture of what is going on with it. If you are close up you are too involved with the finer details.

Both Peter and Kate Adams started bonsai in the early 1960's. Peter in the UK, and Kate in the USA. Kate had been doing bonsai for about 20 years before she met Peter, fell in love and combined many of their resources, which often seems to happen in these circumstances!

Kate started using photography as a "tool" for bonsai as a natural development from its "normal" use for children, pets and holidays, and she is a recent convert to digital. Her photos have been used in a number of books, including Peter's, and she has recently written her own bonsai book "*BONSAI - Easy Steps With 21 Species*", many of the paintings and drawings have been done by Peter!

Peter studied art at university in the UK in the early 1960's, and his interest in bonsai sprang from that. He originally made a living from painting in his early years in London (mainly portraits) and bonsai was his hobby. Later he decided to go with bonsai as a business and painting as the hobby – he's still not sure if he made the right decision! Peter had a bonsai business & he imported many trees into the UK - mainly from Japan. Over the years he has written several books on bonsai; married Kate; moved to the USA where they live in Washington State, and he teaches bonsai – an aspect of bonsai that he really enjoys. His creative and artistic sides come out with the tree design and drawings (pencil, pen and watercolours) that would appear to be his trademark; these are seen in his regular column in *Bonsai Focus*, the European bonsai magazine.

I feel that we were both lucky and privileged to have Peter and Kate here in Hamilton for these few days towards the end of their three month Australian tour. I learned a lot over our three day period. I find that, apart from picking up all sorts of information and stuffing that into my brain, it also helps in other ways such as networking with others in the bonsai fraternity. These learning opportunities makes one realise that you do know more than you think you do, which gives both your confidence and ego a boost.



Above - Pine belonging to Sandra Qunital



Left - Deodar cedar belonging to Peter Mudie

I would like to thank Clinton Nesci in Australia for offering us Kate and Peter, also to Ann and Peter Mudie for hosting the Adams family for the duration, and everyone else for making it work so well.

# Leo Reginald Jury 1931-2011

## The Man Behind the Trees



Leo was born in the depression years when times were tough and spent a fair amount of his early childhood with his brothers and sisters on the Taranaki farm where the family lived. He loved his horses, Paddy, Socks, and his favourite Bonnie. He enjoyed learning to do tricks, jumps and stockwork on them. He had a BSA motorbike and competed in grass-track racing.

As a young man he took part in compulsory military training, in the transport division driving trucks, which he thoroughly enjoyed. Leo loved the outdoors and spent many hours pig hunting with his dogs, deerstalking, whitebaiting and trout fishing. He took up small bore target shooting, and achieved A Grade later in life.

Throughout his adult life there were three hobbies Leo was always passionate about: photography, bonsai, and music,

particularly guitar. He loved playing guitar; played and sang in various places, bands and shows, and then taught guitar as well. He took up playing again about 6 years ago, in a regular weekly session with another musician.

His interest in bonsai spanned 40 years, and he was a life member of the New Plymouth Bonsai Club, having established the club in 1984. He was President for many years, travelled to overseas Bonsai Conferences, and was well known in bonsai circles throughout New Zealand and beyond. He frequently travelled to other clubs in the country giving demonstrations and talks. The New Plymouth club could not have functioned so well without him, as he took new members under his wing and helped guide them down the bonsai learning path with his wide knowledge and skills. Every club day he was always there, helping in his quiet way but never forcing his ideas or opinions on anyone. His collection was large by any standard, and ever-growing, through his great skill in propagation from cuttings, seeds and air-layering.

Leo loved every tree, and through his other passion of photography his ability to see the unusual formations, different lights, textures, and shapes that most of us wouldn't notice became apparent. Leo was an expert photographer, regularly winning local and national competitions and was a national selector.

He worked hard all his life and had great work ethics and integrity. For much of his life he ran his own butcher shop and in the early married years, his wife, Bev, was up early doing the deliveries. The last part of his working life was a good, clean enjoyable job as a hardware shop storeman.

Leo and Bev travelled a lot, seeing virtually all of New Zealand, driving anywhere and everywhere, and tramping some strenuous walks and tracks around the country. They also went overseas to Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, Hawaii, Norfolk Island, Canada and Los Angeles, before Bev died in 2005. More recently Leo travelled to Japan and the Chatham Islands.

In the past few years, Anne, his student in the accompanying photo, has provided caring companionship, kindness, patience and dedication as his illness progressed, and accompanied him on the Chathams trip.

He will be missed but, besides his children and grandchildren, a little of him lives on in the high quality bonsai trees he has developed, which are now in the care of many others.

*Compiled by Malcolm Potts mainly from tributes given by Leo's son Brett and New Plymouth Bonsai President Glenys Jackson.*



# AVON BONSAI SOCIETY

## SPRING SHOW

Once again we have held a very successful show, with good crowds attending in spite of the expected difficulties for parking due to the Hospital commandeering the traditional spaces. However, a large area has been developed behind the hall which proved more than adequate.

The Orchid Society was well represented with growers, sellers and exhibitors, although some of our people felt there weren't as many as last year. This could possibly be due to the upsets with the earthquakes, in fact I was told that one grower lost his entire stock, greenhouse and all.

The China Painting ladies again put on a wonderful display of items for sale. Prices were extremely reasonable, given the time and skill needed. I was sorely tempted but managed to limit myself to purchasing just one orchid. Let's hope it performs better than the one I bought about four years ago which has still to flower!

A big thank you to all who entered their bonsai, and an especial thanks to those who gave their time to setting up the show as well as manning it during the weekend. Also, I have never seen our show dismantled so quickly! MANY THANKS FOR THAT TOO!

Total number of bonsai entered was 40, many of which we have not seen before on club nights! Finally thank you to Julie who donated a lovely juniper bonsai which was won by our own Myra! The raffle made \$129.30 thanks also goes to those who donated items for the sales table which raised a further \$29 for the club funds.



**Winner Class One: Informal Upright**  
*Wendy Gibb Larch*



**Winner Class Two: Natives**  
*Chris McLaren Totara*



**Winner Class 3 - Cascade/Semi-Cascade**

*Nick Pjifers – Alpine Willow*

**Winner Class 4 - Group**

*Beverley Van – Potentilla*

**Winner Class 5 - Bonsai with Rock**

*Wendy Gibbs – Corokia*

**Winner Class 6 - Windswept/Slanting**

*Wendy Gibbs – Larch*

**Winner Class 7 - Free Choice of Style**

*Beverley Van – Larch*

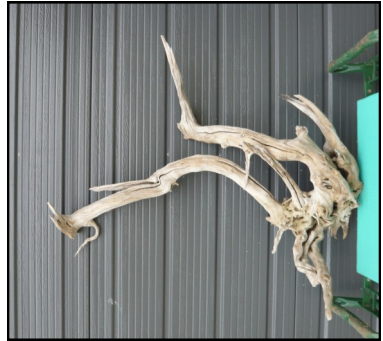




**BEST IN SHOW WINNER**  
**Wendy Gibbs with her**  
**winning larch**

(Wendy also won People's Choice with her maple which had also gained a Highly Commended award).

# The Challenge



Last January Jan Barrows moved to a smaller property, this meant downsizing the bonsai collection as well. Which ones to take was an agonising decision, but finding many of the larger ones were too heavy to lift now, they went to good homes. Now a new shade house can accommodate fifty specimens. It appears fairly sheltered as a larch had half an inch of new growth in June which is unusual. All is well.

Two juniper air layers have been removed, both had many brown roots, Jan intends to use them with these pieces of driftwood. This is a recognised practice in Japan .

Now **The Challenge**: How about you folk designing trees that would complement each piece. They are 75 cm high. What would you consider are the important elements?



- Movement of driftwood and the tree in the same direction or opposite ?
- Which would be the dominant force, the driftwood or the tree ?
- What angle of planting will produce the best balance ?
- How much of each trunk can be shown ?
- Don't forget space is important too
- What type of container would you use ?

**Submit your designs - [penjing@actrix.co.nz](mailto:penjing@actrix.co.nz) or mail to Bonsai Times**

# Workshop with Joy Morton

*The Gore Bonsai Club held a weekend workshop with Joy Morton, Otago Club, over the weekend of 8/9 October in Maitaia. Here Fiona Burgess shares with us the club members experiences and the trees as they developed.*



We were encouraged to take before and after photos of our trees (if we remembered!), and as you'll see, we had some amazing transformations.

Joy quietly worked with each of us to explain the different options for our trees, and what needed done, and why. The trees varied in age and style from young nursery plants to some very old (a bit like us)!

Corrie Bastiaansen's pine was pruned and wired and then repotted into an amazing looking Literati style bonsai.



Carol Graves worked away on her Juniper, thinning out the foliage pads and rewiring it. It was also repotted and the results speak for themselves – what a difference!





For those of us who wanted to replot our bonsai, Joy suggested that we soak them in a bucket with a mixture of SEASOL and water, after we had pruned the roots etc. This gives them an extra boost along.

Just as the roots were being trimmed on Lois Davidsons Chamaecyparis, Joy snuck away and came back with one of her state of the art tools – a TOMAHAWK AXE! It had us in fits of laughter, with a quiet polite remark that perhaps it should have been done a few years earlier.

Lois's Chamaecyparis after the "tomahawk attack". A stunning tree.

Joy also took the opportunity to present Corrie with her long awaited trophy for Champion Bonsai from the local Autumn Flower Show in Gore earlier on in the year.

The club happily supports this show but it would be nice if any others in the area that have bonsai could bring along their trees as well. The more the better!



All through the entire weekend there were cackles and laughs from throughout the room. It seems that Joy, Colin and the others had a lot of "history" from back when the club first started up. It was great to hear them reminisce and laugh about old times. It seems they got up to lots of shenanigans when they were younger!

Helen Whyte worked away on a pine and several larger trees. Thinning out and rewiring where needed (so good at wiring she doesn't need to look at the tree)!!





Joy helped Trish along with showing her how to wire a tree and explaining the different styles and shapes. Joy was easy to understand and explained everything in simple language which was much appreciated by those of us who still have a lot to learn.



Joy explaining to Corrie how to style this cedar into a windswept style tree.



Joy helping Lois with some ideas for her tree.



We all had a wonderful weekend, and would encourage anybody who is quietly "bonsaiing" away at home, to seek out and join their local bonsai club so they can participate and learn in this type of workshop. A lot of us learn better by "doing" rather than reading.



# TIPS FOR TREES

*Welcome to the first Tips for the North Island. The North Island spans several degrees latitude and longitude so the temperatures and climatic conditions in Northland will be different to those of Wellington or New Plymouth, so I will cover general things for the season. For more specific information for your area please contact your local Bonsai Club members.*

## Summer

November to February.

**Watering in summer** is critical as bonsai have only the water in the bonsai pot to live on. Generally bonsai need watering every day in summer or checked to see if they are in need of water. Even if it has rained some bonsai may still be too dry as different trees use different amounts of water and some trees with a lot of foliage on their top canopy may not be getting water to the soil surface in the pot below.

**Watering by hand** is recommended (with the hose) so you can get the rose or nozzle of the hose beneath the canopy of foliage onto the soil surface. At this time of year in Hamilton City where I live, the chemical levels in the water are high, so allow the water to run out of the hose for a minute or two before watering your trees. Watering occasionally by dunking the tree in a bucket or deep dish is a very good idea to thoroughly soak the soil. Submerge the tree and pot so the water is well above the soil level, and leave it in the water till all the bubbles stop (this can sometimes take ten to fifteen minutes) .

**Try to water** in the mornings before lunch as watering at night leaves the roots of the trees sitting in water when the roots are taking up air not water. If you're growing very small bonsai (Mame or Shohin) under 8 inches tall, or tree species that use a lot of water like Wisteria, place them on a tray with stone chip in it. Fill the tray with water as you water the bonsai each day and this will ensure that the bonsai have enough water to last all day.

However watering by hand is not always practicable and many people these days use automatic watering systems using spraying systems or trickle feeds into each bonsai pot. If you use these systems now is the time to turn on your system and check that all the jets and nozzles are working correctly so that no bonsai dry out because the feed to that tree is blocked or faulty.

**Shade** from midday is a good idea for most species used in the art of Bonsai. Especially if you are growing the smaller sized Bonsai. Pines and Cedars are the main exceptions to this, as they love full sun even in the shallowest of bonsai pots.

**Summer pruning** - this is the time to trim those shaggy Maples and northern tree species you have been allowing to grow over spring. Trim Maples back to two sets of two leaves. Constantly trim southern trees like Chinese Elms, Zelkova, and Trident Maples back to three or four leaves or the length you want, to keep the shape you have chosen. Now is the time to cut off the candles you let extend on Pine bonsai that you don't want, and leave the ones growing in the direction you want.

**Wiring** - the beginning of summer (November) is a good time of year to wire bonsai that need shaping, as the wire won't cut in so quickly, and trees often set in the new shape quicker.

**Re-potting** - I don't recommend re-potting most tree species until February unless you really need to and are prepared to take the risk of over stressing the tree. The exceptions to that are Privets, Jade Trees and Figs, that I have found can be re-potted where I live in the Waikato. quite happily in December and January. I have also been told that Pines are happy to be re-potted in December and January but I have not tried it.

**Fertilising** - unless you are really keen there is little point in feeding by December/January, as the flush of spring growth has passed and some tree species become almost dormant in the heat of summer. Once a month a liquid feed with your favourite low nitrogen fertiliser or a one off top dress of your favourite general purpose granular fertiliser will suffice in summer. I use a hydroponic nutrient that I water in once a month.

Treat your bonsai like pets. If you're going away try and arrange someone to come in every couple of days and check that all the trees have water and that nothings fallen over or onto the your bonsai.

**Sandra Quintal**  
**Hamilton Bonsai Club**



# OTAGO BONSAI SOCIETY

Our September meeting was a demonstration on group planting by Jan Letts and in October a workshop on members own trees. We try to alternate talks with activities that involve the whole membership. In December we had a talk on reducing leaf size as this is coming up to the time of year to undertake this on deciduous trees. We also asked those who had given a demonstration earlier in the year to bring the tree back to show how it had developed. It is important to not only give an interesting demonstration but to undertake this with sufficient care to ensure the tree's health and longevity.

The Committee has been working hard to ensure a stimulating and interesting convention in March next year. Activities appear to be going according to plan at this stage. It was pleasing to have already received about 50 registrations, some from Australia.

## **WHAT WE SHOULD BE DOING TO OUR BONSAI DURING THE NEXT FEW WEEKS IN THE SOUTH**

**From the Avon Bonsai Society**

Once the first flush of spring growth has arrived, it is important to maintain this with regular and correct watering and feeding.

Having a strict routine for both of these is paramount in keeping your bonsai looking their very best.

Another important consideration is keeping a careful watch for any disease and insect infestation. Some insects are very clever at hiding themselves and assuming a disguise which makes it very difficult to spot them until suddenly you look at a bonsai and realise that there is something wrong. Look at the undersides of leaves, especially maples, for greenfly. Woolly aphid is another nasty to look for, also scale insects can sometimes look like part of the branch. Don't be fooled!

Plant disease make their presence known by damaging the foliage or causing the whole tree to suddenly collapse. So watch out for signs of spots on the leaves, curling leaves etc. or just a general unhealthy look. If you are not sure what the problem is, either ask a club member or take some damaged leaves to a nursery.

I like to feed my bonsai at least once a fortnight, sometimes every week. It is a good idea to give a plant feed high in nitrogen in the spring to encourage healthy foliage, both in evergreens and deciduous. There are several suitable brands on the market. Some people like to tail off the feed towards the warmer weather, I like to continue with a reduced dosage through to autumn when I change to a plant food higher in potassium and lower in nitrogen. A little and often is the way to go. Think of it like this, we don't sit down and eat a whole month's food at one sitting, neither should bonsai be fed a big dose just every now and then. We will be having discussions regarding feeding bonsai during 2012.

Keep the surface of your bonsai free from weeds, and try not to have the entire surface covered with moss, as this can prevent water penetrating to the soil underneath. It is also a great place for moss caterpillars to hide.

As the weather becomes warmer, it is a good idea to pick up your bonsai. You may be surprised just how light some are, indicating that the soil in the pot may have dried out more than it should. As the season progresses, the pot will become full of roots which will not retain water the same way the potting mix does. If it feels light, soak it until the bubbles stop rising to the surface. This could be a good time to add diluted plant food to the water to ensure that the roots are receiving this.

From January onward foliage can become rather tatty, so carefully remove those leaves that are damaged. If you are unfortunate enough to come home one day and find a bonsai with severely wilted foliage, put it in a bowl of water immediately, and place in a shaded, cool spot and also mist the foliage thoroughly. If by the next day the foliage hasn't recovered, you may need to cut all leaves off, leaving the stalk. With luck within a week or so these leaf stalks will fall off and new leaves will emerge.

If you are planning on going away from home over the warmer months, either leave your treasures with someone reliable, or check and recheck your automatic watering system! I have heard some real horror stories of systems failing and the owner returning home to dead bonsai. Not a nice way to end a holiday!

# AUCKLAND BONSAI SOCIETY



## Auckland Bonsai Society Annual Show

On the 8th October we held our annual show at the Auckland Horticulture Council Rooms. A good number of trees were provided by different club members so the end result was the club had over thirty trees on display.

During the day we had a steady stream of visitors come to view and talk about bonsai and hopefully a few new members will come from this day. We also held an open workshop where members brought trees along to work on, get advice and have good Bonsai Fellowship. Both the show and the workshop proved very popular with the public and the members.

A few weeks earlier we had an open day at four of our members' gardens north of the bridge. This gave us a great opportunity to see some very established collections as well as some of our younger members. I myself was very pleased to see so many good trees in all four collections.

Many thanks to all involved for both these days.



# Notes from the NZBA Committee

The Committee met by teleconference on 26 June and will meet again on 27 November. The results of the survey to clubs were discussed and there will be a further discussion with the results of the survey of individual members now available. A brief summary of the results is included in this edition of Bonsai Times. The Committee is looking at alternatives to the traditional National Convention in 2013 and 2014 as there is no club able to host these events. The key factors that are of concern in organising a major convention are the number of activists available within various clubs who are willing to put in the time to organise it and the gradual decrease in delegates over the last few conventions which impacts on the financial viability. What we are looking for is new and innovative ways of encouraging and supporting bonsai in New Zealand, other than through a convention. The other matter on which this impacts is the AGM and related organisational requirements such as the election of officers and financial reporting. The Committee is considering various options and will send out its recommendation to clubs in early December.

## THE RESULTS OF THE 2011 SURVEY

Thanks to all those who responded to the survey. We received 14 responses from clubs and 23 from individual members of which seventeen were also members of clubs. Holding the convention every 2 years was the preferred frequency with annually a close second. Only one club was willing to hold the convention in the next 5 years with 6 in the next 5 to 10 years. 7 clubs were not in a position to hold a convention at any time. Overwhelmingly clubs and individual members wanted the competitions at the convention although it was suggested that the photographic competition could be digital with file protection. On years when a convention is not held clubs were in favour of a visiting speaker whereas individual members preferred regional meetings. It is possible to have both to meet all needs. The ability to attend seminars was clearly related to individual circumstances such as work commitments. If we are to have a visiting speaker then to spread seminars/workshops around the country it will be necessary to hold some of these mid-week.

Six clubs had their own website. Few viewed the NZBA website frequently and most people accessed it occasionally. About 1/3 of the respondents rarely or never viewed the website. The sections found most useful were the gallery of trees with native trees and club information also popular.

The magazine, Bonsai Times, was highly regarded by all. It is circulated at meetings and/or held in the library in many clubs so should reach most members. We received offers to write articles from 6 clubs and 5 individuals. This is pleasing as Dianne sometimes has difficulty in obtaining sufficient articles and we will be following up with these volunteers. Information from clubs and what is happening in NZ were particularly valued as were 'how to' articles and information on specific tree types. Eight clubs produce their own newsletter. An e mailed version has been suggested as a means of increasing access by individual members but is difficult to organise in practice. There was little support from responders for an e mailed version.

### Some comments

#### Website

- More club input
- Ask the experts section
- More on NZ natives
- Increase clubs use of events section
- Expand gallery & include a history of the trees
- Calendar for the Southern hemisphere
- Quarterly/seasonal cultivation notes
- Section for club newsletters

## Bonsai Times

- More information from clubs such as programmes and activities
- Articles on NZ natives
- Advice & guidance on techniques relevant to NZ
- Articles showing the progression of trees
- Q & A section
- Reviews of overseas conventions
- How to increase membership

There were a number of suggestions of how the Committee could help clubs and members. One was importing high quality pots and tools and providing other bulk supplies. It is accepted that resources within NZ are limited but with a small, widely dispersed market importing items that will meet individual needs is financially very risky. The only recourse for members is attending conventions and the internet. Other suggestions such as bringing in overseas speakers, publicity and promoting bonsai throughout NZ are areas that the Committee is considering.

This is just a brief summary and provides the Committee with useful information on what is important to clubs and members and priority areas for attention. It will guide the activities of the Committee for the next few years. Some of the suggestions such as information about club activities and events in Bonsai Times will be dependent on clubs providing these. There will be an opportunity for further discussion at the Dunedin convention.

In future editions we are intending to have an "Ask the Experts" section. This was suggested in the recent survey. While it was suggested that this could be on the website there are practical problems for the website in doing this. It is therefore suggested that this would be more appropriate in Bonsai Times. Please submit your queries to the editor for onward transmission to our expert panel.

## National Bonsai Convention Dunedin

March 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> 2012



Contact - Jan Letts - 41 Elliffe Place, Dunedin

Chinese  
Connections  
Otago Bonsai Convention 2012



E-mail - [gjletts@xtra.co.nz](mailto:gjletts@xtra.co.nz)

### For Programme and Registration contact

**Jan Letts, 41 Elliffe Place,  
Andersons Bay, Dunedin**  
**E mail [gjletts@xtra.co.nz](mailto:gjletts@xtra.co.nz) Ph. 03 454 2113**

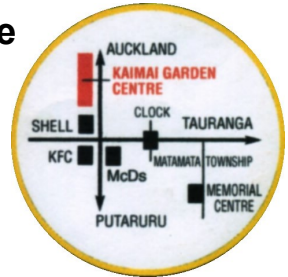
**or the Otago Bonsai Society website  
[www.otagobonsai.co.nz](http://www.otagobonsai.co.nz)**



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Plants suitable for Bonsai



As well as always being willing to talk Bonsai, Graeme also hosts several workshops and demonstrations at Kaimai Garden Centre every year.

**PARTICIPATE AT YOUR LOCAL BONSAI CLUB**  
**ATTEND THE NATIONAL BONSAI CONVENTION**  
**SHARE YOUR BONSAI EXPERIENCES BY**  
**WRITING AN ARTICLE FOR THE**  
**BONSAI TIMES**

**BRIGHT  
IDEA**

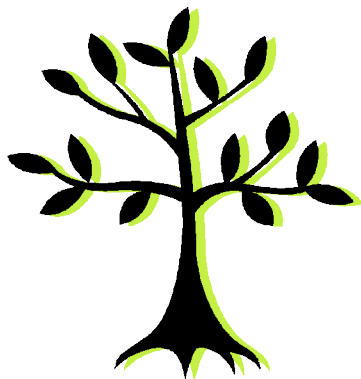


New Members

Ian Gear — Wellington

Kerrie Cole — Whangarei

Darin Taylor — Auckland



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TITLE	DESCRIPTION	FEATURES	Rating
Bonsai at his home		John Naka	4
Finding the Bonsai Within 98 minutes	Working with difficult trees. Ponderosa Pine Wiring Techniques	Andy Smith	7
In Full Circle	Japanese-Style Garden. Design and Implementation	D Slawson & P Krause	
NZBA National Convention Napier 2008	The demonstrations, speakers and exhibition trees		
NZBA National Convention Christchurch 2009	The demonstrations, speakers and exhibition trees		
NZBA National Convention Hamilton 2010	The demonstrations, speakers and exhibition trees	Robert Steven	
Juniper Forest Demonstration		John Naka	6
111-Tree Florida Elm Demo		John Naka	5
39 Tree Stewartia Demonstration		Saburo Kato	6
Two Shimapaku Plantings	Includes Rock Plantings	Yuji Yoshimura	6
US National Bonsai & Penjing Museum	Comments on trees viewed one by one		7
Demonstration	Accent Plants	Keiko Yamane	6
Newstead 2 Bonsai Extravaganza 2006	UK selection display for the Ginkgo Exhibition	John Hanbys Newstead Bonsai	7

## HIRE RULES

- \* DVD's are available at \$10 per month each
- \* Alternatively you can hire 2 DVD's at \$15 per month
- \* To hire you or your club/society has to be a member of NZBA
- \* Forward postage by NZBA
- \* Return postage to NZBA payable by the hirer.
- \* To arrange the hire of a DVD contact

Les Simpons: [simmys@xtra.co.nz](mailto:simmys@xtra.co.nz)

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