

Volume 9 Issue 2

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**BONSAI TIMES**

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## From The President

**As** I sit to write this on a wet Saturday we all know that winter is on the way. With winter starting to set in it is time for us to do wiring and with our deciduous trees a chance to look at them in the raw and plan for the future.

It is over twelve months since NZBA hosted the last convention how time has flown, I hope you are all planning to be in Christchurch on Labour weekend (24 – 25 October) for the great convention that the Christchurch clubs have planned for us. Now is the time for your club to start thinking about hosting a convention. I would like to encourage all clubs around New Zealand to consider hosting conventions in the future along with NZBA co-hosting and sharing the planning. We need to spread the convention around New Zealand, not just the main centres.

Another ask, is that clubs give consideration to nominate people who they feel would drive the future of bonsai within New Zealand. We have some current committee members not standing again after their term finishes. Elections for new officers will be held in October. It is important that we continue to have a strong NZBA for the future.

Have you entered our competitions this year? This is a reminder to enter not only the National Show but also our other competitions: photographic, Suiseki and new talent. These are all very important, and I put a challenge to all clubs if you have people going to Christchurch please consider backing your club members into the New Talent competition - we need these future demonstrators coming on.

In closing keep enjoying your bonsai and hope to see a lot of you in Christchurch at the convention.

## LINDSAY







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







# BONSAI TIMES

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**Amazing** We live in a truly beautiful country. For the past twelve months I have been employed as a chauffeur to drive around our foreign guests and VIP's. This has taken me, as their tour guide, to lots of astounding places from Auckland to Cape Reinga. It has been a truly inspiring adventure. Not only do I get to talk about this incredible country, share its history and admire the scenery, I get to see some of our most ancient trees. As a true bonsai artist what more could I ask for.

I have always said that as bonsai artists we need to get our inspiration from our environment. How long has it been since you have actually looked out there? Our goal is to recreate an ancient tree in a pot so what better place to be inspired than from our own surroundings. Which are remarkable.

I recently visited our God of the Forest Tana Mahuta. After 2000 years I believe he speaks for all trees. Truly the ultimate formal upright. The power of this tree brings tears to your eyes. The mighty Totara trees of the north demonstrate the true form of informal upright right, clump style and mighty forests. Ancient White Pines forests and stunning Puriri trees.

The Pohutukawa is the mainstay of the beach landscapes giving incredible examples of root over rock, windswept and raft. Nothing is more stirring than scrutinizing the root and branch structures of ageless pohutukawa hanging off a rocky cliff face.

Another statement I constantly make is that bonsai is cultural and one just has to look at the trees in our own countryside to be inspired. New Zealand's signature styles are windswept and root over root.

Get out your camera, peel back your eyelids and observe your natural landscapes. Create trees that look like the ancient wonders in our own back yard.

*Dianne*



#### Cover:

Liquid Amber, Sweet Gum. 4 yrs Sam Brierley Collection. Pot by Victor Harris, Erin Pottery Studio

# The Triple Trunk Project



***Peter Mudie from the Hamilton Bonsai Club shares his journey of discovery, purchase, collection, caring, dreaming and finally transforming this amazing triple trunk redwood, with the help of Tony Bebb, into one of the most promising trees for New Zealand's future of bonsai.***



**I** first saw this tree during a visit to Adriaan and Poppie's in 2013. I was immediately struck by the power of the trunks and the structure of the branches which Adriaan had already started.

As we were travelling on a club visit we were not able to take the tree with us so a couple of months later we went back over the Kaimai's with the ute.







The rootball was well wrapped in plastic to keep it moist whilst we travelled back where we managed to get it into a large wooden crate after trimming 5cm off the bottom of the rootball.

The soil level was built up to encourage more surface rooting so I could lower the trunk further when repotting over the next few years.

Over the next eighteen months I thinned out all the deadwood, de-wired the tree and pruned the extension growth to try and start some back budding.



With Tony Bebb coming over to run some workshops for the Hamilton Club I seized the chance to have a private session with him.

For his private sessions Tony normally goes around a collection advising and working on a number of trees. I though he would enjoy the challenge of this big beast.



**A**fter breakfast we had a quick trip to the local bakery to get our lunch then we started on the tree.

Tony had a good look at the tree and we decided on a new front slightly offset from the current one to give a better movement in the trunks with the one on the right moving slightly behind the centre trunk.



The first job was to clear out a few branches we knew we would not be needing as they were too low or in the way.

The main issue to resolve was the trunk on the right hand side. The top of the trunk had been flattened and brought forward making it into a branch.

To correct this some re-bar was inserted into the soil and a piece of plastic piping used to protect the trunk from rubbing on the re-bar. Tony gave the top of the trunk some 'physio' – bending the branch before putting the wire on to stretch the fibres making bending easier. Then a guy wire was attached to the top of the new trunk and it was put into its new position.



The next step was to apply wire. Tony took the left hand trunk and I took the right hand trunk.

With a thirty minute break for lunch we managed to get the wire on and the branches positioned in six hours of non-stop work and about two kg of wire ranging from 1mm to 5 mm, almost half of the wire we used was 4mm.



The final step was for Tony to get out one of his favourite tools – the Arbortech. Tony used this to reduce the bulge in the trunk on the left hand tree where the original trunk was removed. This gave a much better taper.

Time to cool off after getting a bit of sun-burn and admire our work with a beer or two before dinner.





**T**hat night Tony went out and took a photo of the tree with his phone – the flash with the darkness behind really showed up the structure of the trunk and branches so the next night I went out and did the same with a number of my trees.

The tree will now be allowed to develop and encourage thicker growth on some of the lower branches to improve the balance of the tree. The top will be maintained and the tree repositioned at its next repotting ready for the next round of work.

This was a fantastic day with one of Australasia's top demonstrators. Can't wait till Tony gets back next year – he wants to go Black Water Rafting as well as doing some more work on the tree!



**Shohin display  
with a  
difference!**



# Visit to Bay of Plenty



***Visiting other clubs and viewing collections is a great way to share knowledge, form great friendships and get inspiration for your own collection and garden. Hamilton Bonsai Club shares with us their recent trip to the Eastern Bay of Plenty.***



**A** glorious sunny day for our trip to the Eastern Bay of Plenty. Eight of us set off from various locations to meet up at Steve O's place in Papamoa.

Although Steve has not been collecting bonsai for that long he has a very nice collection of trees displayed in a wonderfully landscaped garden.



Next stop was Whakatane to see Sam. Sam has a beautiful modest sized collection of trees which he has put a lot of time and effort into rather than getting a lot of trees and spreading his time between them. The results show in the quality of his trees.

Also in Whakatane was Graham. Some of his collection was inherited from his father but he is creating his own trees as well.







The final collection was Colin's in Kawerau. Colin has been working with bonsai for many years and his collection shows a wide range of mature bonsai in immaculate condition.

Last stop was Tikitere nursery for a wander through the maples. A couple were spotted that would make very good bonsai but saws, spades and axes would be required.

Our thanks to all our hosts for a fantastic day.





# Tony Bebb Workshop



**M**any years ago after holding a successful bonsai convention Hamilton Bonsai Club decided to use its funds to hold a yearly workshop with international or local artists to build skills and knowledge. This has been very successful and many of the workshops have been reported in the Bonsai Times.



Even though these events have brought many rewards to the participants it was often discussed that this could be taken to another level, thus idea of a Study Group Project was born.

Tony Bebb, being an exceptional artist and teacher, was chosen for this three year project. Tony had been working with the Otago Bonsai Society on a similar project (an update later in this newsletter).

Peter Mudie, Hamilton Bonsai Club, shares their activities, photographs and comments.

Sharing ideas and contributing to NZBA is beneficial to all members and the general bonsai community. We look forward to seeing these trees develop over the next three years.



For the first of his three annual visits to work on the development of our trees we split the weekend of workshops into four sessions.

Saturday morning saw some of our more far flung members come down and bring some fairly large trees.

For this weekend of workshops Tony concentrated on getting the bones of each tree sorted with some fairly extensive pruning and shaping to get the structure sorted.





**F**or his subsequent visits, Tony will concentrate on branch development and refinement working on the same trees as this year.

Saturday evening saw us having a meal at a Thai restaurant in Cambridge then it was back to the Potters Society for Sunday.

Sunday saw a different set of trees including those belonging to some of our newer members.



Once again Tony found an excuse for getting the Arbortech out - this time on Ann's Trident maple.

Another great weekend of bonsai work. Now we just need to follow Tony's instructions on the development of the trees until he comes back next year.





# Trunk Chopping

## *For Beginners:* Trunk Chopping For Deciduous Trees

by Andy Rutledge, U.S.A.

**One** operation that every bonsai artist has to perform from time to time is the trunk chop. It is seldom that you will be able to make a bonsai without making some large cuts on the trunk. This is especially true if you work with trees of any significant size.

Larger trees need to be cut back and made more compact to be of use as bonsai material. Sometimes the upper trunk is removed in favor of a smaller shoot that will serve as the new leader. In other cases, the trunk is cut back to a point where there is no potential shoot. In this case you have to wait and see where one or more buds will pop to form a new leader.

There are right ways and wrong ways to cut the trunk of a potential bonsai tree. In this article, I'll detail the best methods for chopping the trunk of most deciduous trees, like maple, bald cypress and elm.

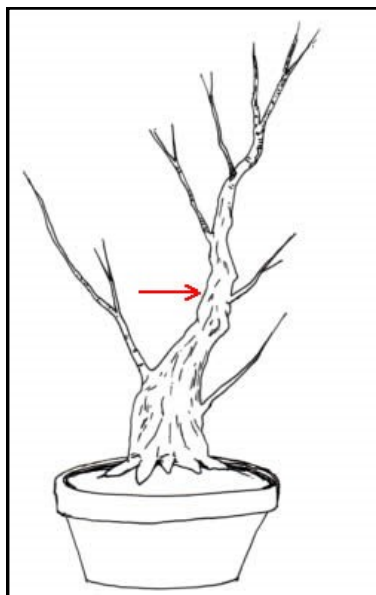
### Trimming

The best time for most trunk chops is in mid to late spring or early summer (depending on your geographic location); after the new leaves have formed and begun to harden off.

### Case One

Cutting back to an existing leader a tree suitable for a chop

Here we have a likely candidate (above). This tree already has pretty good taper, but it is too tall for bonsai purposes.



Until now, you've been growing the trunk for size and you're ready to begin its transformation into a bonsai. You've decided to cut back the trunk to an existing small branch that will be the new leader (indicated by the red arrow).

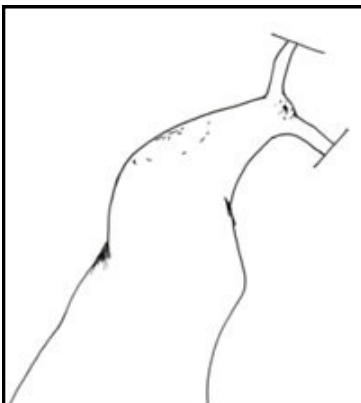
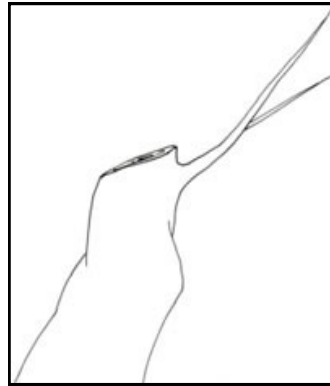
Use the saw and cut a little bit above the branch. Be careful not to damage the branch that will become the new leader.

The following images show a detail of right and wrong ways to make this cut.

## Good

Cut back to a bit above the new leader.

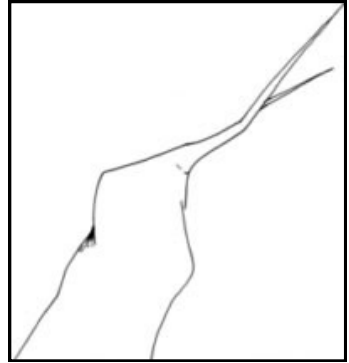
Use a cutter and then the grafting knife to reduce the wound to the shape shown here. The rounded gouge can be used to create a channel around the interior perimeter of the wound so that the callus starts by rolling into the wound. Be sure to apply cut paste to the wound.



When it has healed, the transition from the scar to the new leader (that has now grown thicker and has been cut back) is natural looking.

## Bad

A cut at the level of the new leader must not be left straight.



When the wound heals and the new leader grows thicker, there will be an ugly, flat transition and the new leader will bulge above the old scar. This is not natural looking.

## Case Two

Cutting back with no existing branches.

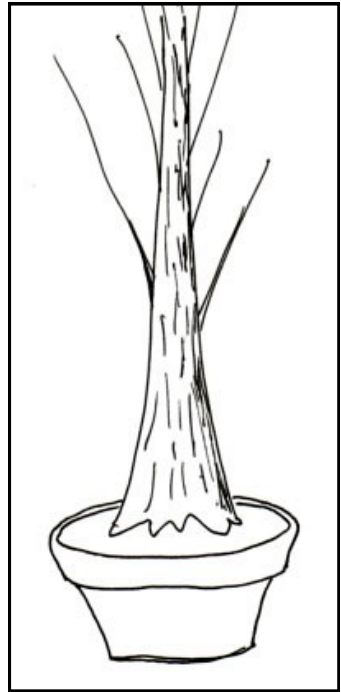
A straight trunk that you want to cut back

Here you have a straight trunked tree; perhaps an elm or a bald cypress.

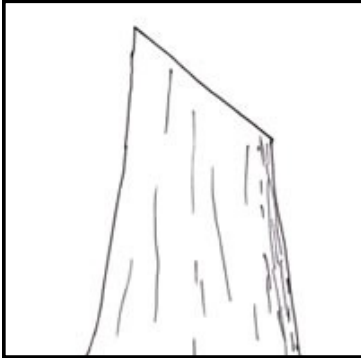
On this tree, you may want to cut the trunk back to a point where no branches are growing. You will have no new leader and will have to wait for buds to form and create a new leader. You hope that a bud will form in the correct place, but you don't know what the tree will do.

In this case, since you cannot be sure where a new shoot will grow, you should not work too fast and begin your taper. Instead of cutting on an angle, cut straight across.

The following sequence of illustrations shows what can happen if you do things right or if you do things wrong.







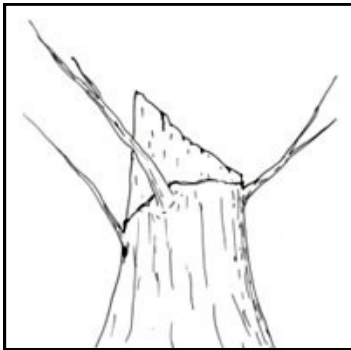
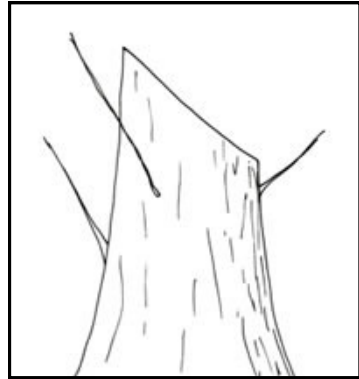
**This is a mistake!**

The following images will show you why.

**Oops!**

When the new shoots emerge, they may or may not grow where you would like them to.

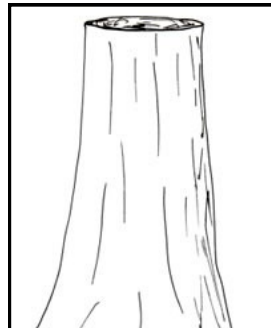
No shoot emerged at the top of the tapered slant. This presents a problem...



...and here's the result. The shoots did not emerge at the top of the tapered slant, so now the trunk has died back to where the shoots did grow.

This is not likely what you had in mind and your options are now severely limited.

...Instead, cut like this.

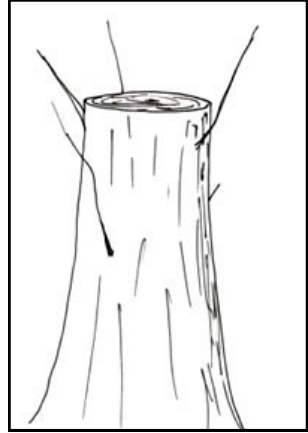


## Good!

This is how you should cut the trunk in this case. This way, you are not committed to any one front or any particular branch configuration.

This allows for many possibilities.

Applying cut paste to the large wound can help in preventing dieback, which often occurs before the new buds form.



Now when the new shoots emerge, you have your pick of which to use for the new leader.



After you've chosen a leader and removed the others at its level, you can then shape your trunk to accommodate the future growth of the leader/trunk.

The shaping of the wound is done just as in the previous example. The new leader and the trunk will eventually form a natural looking transition.



*A picture of a Redwood recently worked on at a workshop in Hamilton last year. It was reduced and the new growth is starting to develop. A great way to get the trunk size.*

***Brian Ellis received this from Alan Walker in US and thought you may be interested. It is an amazing read.***

## **OLDEST LIVING BONSAI DISCOVERED IN TOMB**

What is surely the oldest living bonsai and likely one of the oldest domesticated trees was discovered by Chinese archeologists upon opening the tomb of the fourth Emperor of the Shang Dynasty, 1700-1066 BC. Although the tomb was one of the most lavish displays ever found of ancient royalty, the most astonishing thing there was a living bonsai over three thousand years old.

The tree is a type of pine whose species, at the time of the original report, was unknown due to the changes caused by the no light environment. A system whereby one drop of water per minute fell on the tree and a ventilation system that kept the air moving are the only guesses as to what kept the little tree alive.

Planted in a solid gold pot with rough diamonds for drainage gravel, the 16" tree has lost its chlorophyll to the point where the roots and foliage (only a few needles 0.2 inches long) are white. The roots are so dense that there was no soil left in the pot. There had been some attempt at growth, but it was very fine, and no needles had developed.

The tree was taken to the Central Bureau of China Horticulture for examination where, after several weeks, there appeared a definite attempt at growth including a few needles. The new growth is nearly as pale as the rest of the tree, though, and there is conjecture that some sort of transfusion will be required if chlorophyll cannot be regenerated. There was a strong move to have the tree returned to the tomb, but wiser heads have prevailed so far.

This information came from ***Bonsai Magazine***, Vol. XXIV, No. 6 ***via Bonsai Down Under*** from Australia ***via The China Archeological and Antiquities Journal***, April 1, 1984. As you can see, the information is over thirty years old. The editor will continue to look for further information. At this point, the fate of the tree is not known.



# Otago Bonsai Society



Our first outing for the year was a visit to members' collections.

*Left:* Lynn's bonsai collection

*Below:* Members gather at Russ and Leonie's

Our first meeting of the year in February was a workshop on photographing bonsai conducted by Robert McAllister. This was intended to encourage members to enter the photographic competition at the National Bonsai Convention. We also looked at what trees would be suitable for creating a cascade for the workshops later in the year. During the year there will be four workshops on creating a cascade from selecting an appropriate tree to final potting.



## April meeting

The main activity for this meeting was the first of the four workshops over the year for members to create a cascade bonsai. Trees selected at the February meeting were brought along for an initial styling; the next stage in May is wiring the trees. Members brought along photographs of their trees which followed the talk in February by Robert on how to photograph bonsai. There was discussion on the relative merits of composition such as lighting and background with expert comment from Robert.

It was also a sad evening in that we said farewell to Graham and Jan Letts who had been President and Secretary respectively for a number of years. They were shortly to move to Alexandra and while we would miss their significant contribution to the Society there would no doubt be opportunities to catch up with them at a later date. The Society is now in the capable hands of Joy Morton as President and Lynn Slobbe as Secretary.



**Left: Members starting on their cascade**

**Below: Robert reviewing the photographs**



The tree of the month competition included the Jan Mulholland Group Planting trophy which was won by Joy Morton.



**Joy with the group planting and trophy, presented by Robert McAllister**

# Tony Bebb Workshop

On Friday 13 March we welcomed Tony Bebb from Brisbane for his third workshop, following on from his visits in 2013 and 2014. The weekend started on the Friday evening with a pot-luck dinner and a demonstration by Tony. He continued working on three trees that he first started styling two years ago.



*Tony assisted by Lynn with the wiring*



*One of the completed trees*

The trees will be allowed to grow further with repotting and on-going styling. On the Saturday and Sunday there were a number of workshops where members brought back trees that they had been working on over the previous two years under the guidance of Tony. This was aided by photographs taken by Graham at the previous workshops that effectively showed how the trees had progressed over the three years. This demonstrated the importance of photographs for recording the changes in a bonsai over time.

Engaging the same demonstrator for workshops on three consecutive years was valuable in developing trees to an advanced level and provided consistency of styling. After the weekend some members engaged Tony to work on their own collections which was considered to be a very worthwhile investment.



# Helen Whyte

**Helen Whyte** will be sadly missed by the members of the Gore Bonsai Club.

Helen was one of the original few who got together back in the 1970's in a tent in their back yard, to try out this thing called "bonsai".

A few years later the Gore Bonsai Club was born. Helen was an integral part of this small group. From holding a hypertufa workshop at their farm at Waimumu to helping out with anything and everything involved with the club. Over her time with the club Helen held the position of Secretary for many many years. Her perfect handwritten minutes were the envy of many, Helen was a perfectionist and this flowed on to her love of bonsai. She would spend many hours quietly pinching back her trees to get them to look "just right". Helen attended many conventions and workshops throughout the country over the years and always talked fondly of the many people she met, and with a few giggles and smiles at what they used to end up doing to some of their trees!

You have left big shoes to fill within the Gore Bonsai Club, but you will live on through your bonsai and with what you have shared with us all over the years.



# Margaret Brewer

**Margaret Brewer** was a founder member of the Wanganui Bonsai Buddies and also a Life Member. She passed away on Saturday 25th April and will be sadly missed for all the work she has done over the years

Neil Gardner, Wanganui Bonsai Buddies.

# NZ National Bonsai Convention

## Woolston Community Club

### Christchurch October 23-25<sup>th</sup> 2015

WORKSHOP with *Boon*,  
Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October

We are delighted to present  
**Bonsai Boon**  
**From California**



Bonsai Boon Manakitivipart is one of the leading bonsai artists and demonstrators world-wide. He is the only non-Japanese to win the grand prize at the Kindai Bonsai Styling Contest in Japan (April 2000)

*Plus local demonstrators*  
*The National Bonsai Exhibition*  
*Trade stalls, raffles and prizes*

**\$175 full registration**

**(\$155 Early Bird by May 31<sup>st</sup>)**

**Details at [www.bonsaiconvention.net.nz](http://www.bonsaiconvention.net.nz)**



# 2015 NZBA National Convention

## Draft Programme

(Programme subject to change if required)

### Friday

- 3.30 Competition Judging
- 6.00 Registration
- 6.30 Welcome Reception: cash bar
- 7.00 Finger food served
- 7.30 Entertainment
- 8.00 **Introduction to Bonsai Boon; critique of show trees**

### Saturday

- 8.00 Registration
- 8.30 **Demo - Tree 1, Bonsai Boon**
- 10.30 Morning Tea
- 10.45 **Demo - Tree 1, Bonsai Boon continued**
- 12.30 Lunch
- 1.15 **Demo - Tree 1, Bonsai Boon, continued**
- 3.00 Afternoon Tea
- 3.15 **Demo on grafting techniques – Kevin Garnet**
- 4.45 Finish
- 5.00 AGM
- 7.00 Drinks
- 7.30 Convention Dinner & Awards
- 11.00 Close



# Sunday

8.00 Registration

8.30 **Demo - Tree 2, Bonsai Boon**

10.30 Morning Tea

10.45 **Simultaneous Demos – of Mountains and Rocks; local artists**

12.30 Lunch

1.15 **Demo - Tree 2 contd./critique, Bonsai Boon**

2.45 Afternoon Tea

3.00 Raffles, Auctions

3.30 Invitation to Next Convention, Closing remarks, Close

## Accommodation:



Arcadia Motel, 564 Ferry Road, Woolston, Christchurch 8023,  
Ph 0800 272 2342; 4 minutes walk from venue; Convention rate is  
\$50 per night per person; must book by phone



All Season Holiday Park, 5 Kidbrooke St , Christchurch 8062,  
Ph 03 384 9490; 16 minutes walk; Cabins, \$100 per night



Cashel Court Motel, 457 Cashel St, Christchurch 8011,  
Ph 03 389 2768; 5 minutes by car, double room \$100 per night;  
[info@cashel-court-accommodation.co.nz](mailto:info@cashel-court-accommodation.co.nz)



Homestay: Contact Ken Bain, 6 Watermill Blvd, Christchurch, 8051;  
[kenorhelen@clear.net.nz](mailto:kenorhelen@clear.net.nz)

## The Koru Award - NZBA Emerging Bonsai Artist Competition

The Koru Award for the NZBA Emerging Bonsai Artist is a competition to recognise and promote new bonsai talent in New Zealand.

### Eligibility requirements

Any person who lives in New Zealand is eligible. They must be a current financial member of a club belonging to the NZBA or of the NZBA itself. They must not:

- Be on the New Zealand National Demonstrators Register
- Have previously been a demonstrator at a National Convention.

### The Competition

Each contestant selected for the competition will:

- 1) Attend and pay their own travel and expenses to the National NZ Convention.
- 2) Be given a three (3) hour time period in which to style the material into a finished bonsai.

The contestants may choose to have refreshments etc. within this time at their own accord. The competitors will not be expected to remove the tree from its container or to re-pot it on the day. The bonsai produced must be horticultural-sound and have a good chance of survival.

- 3) Furnish their own personal tools and turntable (if desired). Power tools are acceptable.
- 4) Be provided with pre-bonsai material and wire by the host club.  
The competitors will draw lots to determine which tree they will receive.
- 5) The competitors may be asked to give a brief description of the work they have completed and their thoughts on the chosen style.

The competition will be open for public viewing immediately following the allocation of trees. No aid will be given to the competitors by any person. Any coaching of competitors, seen or heard, renders that competitor liable to be disqualified. The competition will remain open to public viewing for the duration of the time trees are being worked on.

Following the competition the trees will be judged and then publically displayed.

### Judging

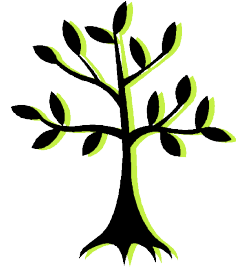
Judging will take place with only the judges present. The judging panel will consist of three Judges; a major demonstrator at the Convention, and two designated by the NZBA Committee from the NZ Demonstrators Register.

The recipient of the trophy is responsible for engraving their name and date on the plaque and for delivering the trophy to the next convention for the Awards Ceremony.

## New Members

Rebecca van Schooten - Wellington

Sara Jacobsen - Porirua



May great things grow from this small beginning



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# WANTED - YOU

## EDITOR BONSAI TIMES



Would you like to share your knowledge and passion for bonsai?  
Are you creative? Enjoy photography?  
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NZBA are looking for a new Editor for the Bonsai Times Magazine.

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current Editor Dianne Miller 09 402 6226 / [penjing@actrix.co.nz](mailto:penjing@actrix.co.nz) or  
President Lindsay Muirhead 0212458800 / [L.dm@xtra.co.nz](mailto:L.dm@xtra.co.nz)

Please forward any written applications to Secretary Brian Ellis.



## Stainless Steel

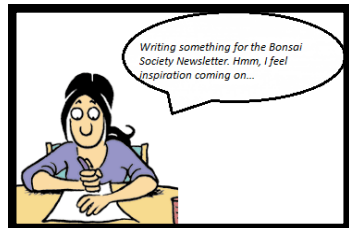
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know how contact our Editor  
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how.

# DVD FOR HIRE

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

- \* DVDs 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 Simpson: [Simmys@xtra.co.nz](mailto:Simmys@xtra.co.nz)



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& Nippon Bonsai & Saikai Art Institute, Tokyo.



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