

NEWSLETTER

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SEASONAL NOTES

Winter can be a very busy time of the year. Maintenance continues on all our trees.

Deciduous trees can now be safely repotted.

Unless you have a very old tree, you can bare root your deciduous trees, and have a good look at the roots. There may be roots crossing over each other, you can gently tease them out, cut out any that are superfluous, or have died. If necessary, you can carefully wire them into position, to allow a better spread of roots at ground level, this will make a huge difference to the appearance of your tree.

Correct any branch defect, shorten branches to enhance the styling of your planting.

Keep those pesky slugs, slaters, and other bugs away, and while you make sure your plants don't get too dry, also take care they don't stay too wet.

Stay alert, and love your Bonsai

Dear Members;

We are still in "lockdown", although restrictions have partly been eased, and there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Some of our members have been very busy, and have very kindly sent me photos so I can publish them in our newsletter, Steve worked on a black pine, and he wrote;

I was given this JBP about 23 years ago. It measured approx. 650mm in height, and 230mm at the base. It had two branches that emerged from the trunk at the same height, one grew to the right, and one the left at 90 degrees to the trunk, with tufts of foliage on the ends.. The tree looked like a big capital T. The length of the branches were much the same as in the photo. I decided on a design that included only one of these branches.

The branch had to be brought down almost 90 degrees, so I wired it with a 6mm wire. Then came a wire strainer, (used to tension the wires in a fence), to the base of the tree, with a guy wire attached to the strainer and the branch. The wire strainer has a ratchet wheel to which the guy wire was connected, and this allowed me to wind the ratchet slowly, over the following year, pulling the branch down until it was in the desired position.

Over the following years, the focus was to develop as many of the branches as possible, with the knowledge that every 2 or 3 years the tree would be rewired, & any unwanted branches eliminated. This process is ongoing. I will now concentrate on finer ramification.



There is another article by Steve on page 4 of this newsletter. Meanwhile there are some answers, by Steve, on the trees Peter wanted improved.

Hi Peter, thank you for posting your trees for comment. To me, the 2 junipers, share a common problem, in that they lack direction.

The 1st juniper has a strong movement to the left, while the 2 right hand branches move to the right.. This in itself, is not a big issue, but the length of the branches, & the resulting foliage mass is too similar to the left hand side. If the main direction of the tree, as dictated by the trunk, is to the left, the right hand foliage mass should be less than that on the left side. This applies to most trees. I would begin by wiring the left hand side of the tree, then do the right hand side, with the aim of reducing both the branch length and the foliage mass..

The 2nd juniper has movement to the right. The left hand branch could be wired to create an apex, with shorter branches growing to the left, thus reducing the foliage mass of the left hand side of the tree.

The ficus is harder to assess from the photo. It seems to be lending itself to a broom style, which is suited to the ficus species. A full wire & prune is required, but I would need to see the tree before recommending much further action.

The junipers can be worked on over the colder months, (not re-potting), But the ficus is best left to the warmer months.

The 3 trees appear to be nice & healthy. Look forward to seeing you & trees later

Regards, Steve

ELAINE'S RE-POTTING:

Many years ago, I purchased a starter juniper (Shimpaku), at one of our Exhibitions. I grew it on, and one day my husband, George, asked me if he could use it, he could make a cascade from it. After George died, in 2012, I saw the planting, and in 2013 I decide to use it as part of demonstration I was doing at one of our Saturday workshops.

I decided to let the tree fall down over a lump of mallee root I had, but to do so, I had to find some way of supporting the tree up high enough to fall over, and so I cut a plastic pot in half, and wired it over the roots, & filled it with soil.

It worked well, only one problem, I could only display the tree from the front, as I could not find a way to successfully hide the ugly pot.

I was lucky to obtain one of Marg Fenn's trays, more circular, so it was wider. My daughter had some dead apricot tree pieces, that had almost petrified over the years, & so I re-potted it during Easter. I am very happy with it. Now I have to work on feeding it, but also I will seek advice on what branches to discard. It will need a full wiring, and a lot of refining, but I am happy, I believe the basis is now there.



Thank you to all who contributed to this newsletter. Hope you are all coping with the isolation period, and finding plenty of things to keep you amused.

One thing I have discovered, all those things I put aside, "Because I don't have time".

That wasn't the reason.

*Hopefully we will be back shortly, if we don't have a serious setback, and when we do resume, we normally meet on the 3rd Wednesday off the month, Moorooduc Hall, Moorooduc @ 7.30pm
Corner Bentons Rd. & Derrill Rd. Moorooduc.*

Bruce Burleigh update:

During the lockdown I have focused on working on the layout of the garden during the rain free days. There are a number of overdue project that included, establishing a short set of steps at one end of an embankment for access to the lower section of the garden, removing weeds from a long section of embankment dressing down the slope of soil, placing a thick layer of mulch then fixing mesh over the mulch to stop slippage, while the new plants establish. This has kept me away from any work on the Bonsai but has been worth all the time involved.

On the rainy days, I have had time to re-purpose three old book cases that no longer had a place inside the house. So I installed the book cases in the workshop to hold magazines/book I have collected on Bonsai over the long years. I was left with enough room in the book case to organise room for most of my bonsai pots.

One other project on the go in between the garden set out is to design a turntable for working on my bonsai trees. I have an old turntable that has served me well over the years. But not quite worked out



when on uneven surfaces or when wiring trees. As such I have identified a base with five cast aluminium legs. I have to construct a support for the turntable bearing, organise a

suitable top and a mechanism to lock the top in place when wiring trees as the photo shows this is in its early stages development.

When listed like this, it appears I just won't be in lock down long enough to complete all the outstanding projects. Regards, Bruce

SECOND ARTICLE FROM STEVE JARROLD:

This English elm was growing in a paddock as a sucker off a larger group of elms. When given to me, it was a small stump with no branches, and few roots.

Development has been achieved, using the clip and grow technique, with wiring used only to place branches in the desired position.

The “clip & grow” technique, used primarily on deciduous trees, involves pinching or pruning new growth to create new buds, and then pruning back to buds pointing in the desired direction. Over time, this creates a dense framework of fine twiggy growth, with no ugly straight branches.



The photo shows the tree with the last of its Autumn colour.

A week or two later, in early May, I pruned any overlong branches and wired any that needed repositioning. Re-potting will be carried out in June/July

We will finish with a photo of Jill's lovely Zygocactus.

