



Founded January 1964

JOURNAL



December 2014

www.torontobonsai.org

Schedule of events

Meetings are held at the TBG (Toronto Botanical Gardens), at 777 Lawrence Avenue East, Toronto, in the studio rooms upstairs. The first meeting is free for non-members.

Bonsai 101: 6:30 – 7:20

Bonsai 101 is held in Studio #2 upstairs, at the TBG. Beginners should read '[INTRODUCTION TO BONSAI](#)', (click on link), posted on the [TBS web site](#)

Dec. 8: no class, but please help set up tables and chairs for the Christmas party!

General meetings: 7:30 – 10:00

Dec. 8: pictorial history and growing profile of club trees; holiday party and treats

Jan. 12: bonsai containers and stands – merits and demerits

Feb. 9: silent auction

Mar. 9: tropical (indoor) bonsai

Apr. 13: boxwood bonsai

Outside our club:

Dec. 26 - Jan. 2: San Marino, California Aiseki Kai 25th Anniversary exhibit of viewing stones (closed Jan 1) 10:30-4:30 every day. The Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens Botanical Center 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA

Jan. 8 - 11: Gafu-ten 40th Anniversary featuring the World Shohin Photo Awards at the Kyoto International Exhibition Hall, Miyako Messe (左京区岡崎成勝寺町 9-1, Kyoto, Japan 606-8343)

Jan. 16 - 18: Joy of Bonsai—Shohin+ hosted by the Kawa Bonsai Society at the Extension Service of University of Central Florida, 150 Sawgrass Road, Bunnell, FL, 32110 and featuring Ted Matson (CA), Sean Smith (PA), William N. Valavanis (NY), and Mike Rogers (FL)
Details at <http://kawabonsai.com/>

Feb. 5 – 13: 89th Kokufu-ten bonsai exhibition
Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum 9.30 am – 17.30 pm

Feb. 9 – 13: Japanese suiseki exhibition
Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum

President's message

by Carlos Bras

Last November, we had a great meeting focused on positive critiquing and the future design of trees. I would like to thank Otmar for leading the meeting in my stead. This month we will be continuing the conversation about design and how photography can assist the artist in making design decisions.

Moreover, we will see how photography is great tool for recording the history of a tree from nursery stock, **yamadori** (trees collected from nature) or even a tree that has been a bonsai for years. Not taking more pictures of my trees is one of the biggest regrets of my early bonsai life. We don't realize what a difference even a few months of can make in appearance, because we see our bonsai every day, and they change so gradually that it's hard to notice. I do have some "before" shots and as I look back at them I realized where I went wrong in development, and how I arrived at the current design. I have learned so much from 'before and after' shots of other bonsai artists as well.

The built-in cameras of today's phones and the availability of inexpensive cameras have facilitated the record-keeping process for bonsai artists. My advice is to take pictures, take lots of pictures, because some of the starter trees you had so little confidence in, may one day be show trees! Use these pictures to analyze your trees' designs and balance; but don't just take front shots, take pictures of the back, the sides, and the top of the tree.

At our next meeting on December 8th, we will be looking at some before and after pictures of our club members' bonsai. We will see the progress, the challenges, and hear from the artist about how they arrived at their decisions on design and style. ~ Style, baby!

TBS Itinerary

Dec. 8th - holiday treats pot luck. We will eat treats, and have members talk about the development of their trees through the years.

Jan. 12th - a discussion on bonsai containers and stands. In bonsai, the design isn't finalized until you have the right pot for the tree. We will also discuss the merit of bonsai stands.

Feb. 9th - silent auction. Members are encouraged to bring an item for auction - always fun and great deals.

Mar. 9th - tropical (indoor) bonsai - more details to follow.

Apr. 13th - boxwood workshop - large, good quality boxwoods were selected from Conan's Nursery.

May 11th - larch forest demonstration. The forest will be raffled off at the end of the night.

June 9th - TBS elections. This is your opportunity to volunteer on the executive. Approach one of the execs if you are interested in being nominated.

Group critique night at the TBS: bonsai salvation

by Greg Quinn

At the November meeting we held a group constructive critique of club trees, with a healthy number of trees and attendees, despite the weather. The purpose of this activity is to get new ideas for bonsai design, or get back to good ideas, with the development of bonsai within our club.



We had a very good and constructive group criticism of club trees, with a high degree of engagement by all present - this is essential for the future development of our trees, as well as our club culture.

The groups consisted of 5 or 6 card-carrying Toronto



bonsai members, and were led by Jan, Arthur, Angelo, Mike, and Darren. We looked at the trees provided, took copious notes, and discussed the current designs and potential designs. After the group critique, we each read out loud the groups' notes on the trees to the assemblage.

Some members brought trees **not knowing they were being critiqued** but it was all helpful and useful, no one's feelings got hurt, and there was a lot of fun and energy.



These events are especially helpful for members whose trees are heading in the wrong direction, away from bonsai, and so we might have saved some designs.



January bonsai tips

from 'Bonsai News' - newsletter of the Lake Charles Bonsai Society, by Alan Walker

Okay, it's safe to say that winter has arrived early here in Toronto. Your outdoor bonsai are dormant and in winter storage. January is characterized by falling daily high temperatures, decreasing from 4°C to 2°C over the course of the month, exceeding 8°C or dropping below -3°C one day in ten, and the daylight continues to decrease.

If you've been collecting and had to prune your newly collected material, be sure to seal all the cuts. They won't really start to heal until dormancy ends, but the exposure to winter winds will draw moisture from the wounds faster than the traumatized root system can replenish it. Coat all the cut areas with Calsmate (cut paste) or pruning wax to seal the wound, and keep out any local pathogens.

Since we usually have dry, cold, and heavy winds during winter, check your winter bonsai storage area to ensure that large branches will not fall on your collection during extreme weather. There was also a lot of winter kill and wind burn last winter on evergreens, especially boxwoods and yews, so putting up an additional wind screen would be a good idea if your trees are in the garden for the winter.

Decrease watering for deciduous trees, since they are not transpiring when their leaves have fallen. You can let the soil go fairly dry between waterings – just enough to keep the roots alive. For evergreens, such as Chinese juniper, red cedar, white cedar, boxwoods, and so on, keep the moisture constant, or they will suffer the aforementioned winter burn, and whole branches could die. A lot of our members simply put some fresh snow on the soil to keep it moist during the winter. There are also some spray on anti-desiccant products available at nurseries as well, such as Wilt-Pruf, which can be used to seal the leaves for the dry winter period.

Watch out for mice, voles, rabbits, squirrels, and other creatures that could damage your trees while in dormancy. It is a good idea to erect a barrier, such as chicken wire, if wintering bonsai outside, and wrap the trunks of your trees with material to protect them. If stored inside in garage, lay out some traps to catch them before they get to business.

Check your indoor bonsai (tropicals) for signs of disease, and insect attacks. Remove the pests before they get out of hand, using an old toothbrush and soap and water or hydrogen peroxide. If the temperatures rise above 10 C, you can take them out again to apply insecticidal soap or horticultural oil, to keep aphids and scale insects at bay.

The slow winter season is a good time to photograph your bonsai. Your deciduous material is fully exposed, and there's nothing like a black and white photograph of a tree to reveal flaws in the branch arrangement. This can be your blueprint for pruning in the spring. Your photographs may also reveal a better front or potting angle. Keep these photographs with your record book. It can be quite rewarding to look over your bonsai records and note how your trees have progressed over the years. Bring your records to one of our general workshops or the meeting to get suggestions from other members for shaping and design. If you're afraid of being pressured into cutting more than you want, just having photos or sketches can save you from regrets and still allow you to get the input from others.

Announcements

TBS election year

This is an election year for the club – please submit your nominations and/or candidacy to the executive before February.

Wanted: TBS coffee assistant

I have been responsible for making coffee for our meetings for the last 4 years. I need an assistant. If someone could please help me with part of the job, I would be happy to continue being involved. Or if someone wanted to make it their own event, I would be happy to help them transition. To talk to Sylvia to help the club with this essential job.

Christmas party

Please bring in your cookies, cakes, and sweeties for our annual Christmas party at the meeting on December 8.

Membership renewal

We are still looking for membership renewals - please see Karen, Kem or Gim at the members table with fees. Please pay with cheques and cash, or credit cards.

Library

Please bring any late returns to the library cart before the meeting and during the coffee break, and see Natalie, our club librarian about unpaid fines.

January publishing deadline

The publishing deadline for the January Journal is January 2.

Regular TBS meetings

Meetings take place on the second Monday of every month, except July and August, at the TBG (Toronto Botanical Gardens), located at 777 Lawrence Avenue East, at Leslie Street, in the auditorium on the west side of the building at 7:30 pm. The general meetings frequently include: demonstrations of bonsai techniques, critiques of bonsai trees, and workshops, in which each participant styles a tree with the help of an experienced member. These meetings are preceded at 6:30 pm. by the Beginner sessions, held upstairs.

A small fee is charged for workshops, and a tree, wire and instructor are provided. To participate in workshops, it is necessary to register in advance of the meeting so that materials can be provided.

Members are encouraged to bring in bonsai to show and work on during the meetings. Wire is provided at no charge. Non-members may attend a meeting at no charge to see if the club is of interest to them.

Library hours and policy

The library is open to members at the beginning of our regular meetings. Members may borrow books free of charge for one month. Late returns cost \$2 per month with a minimum charge of \$2. Please return all materials the next month, and before summer.

Membership desk

The membership desk will be open at all meetings. The opening time may be extended for the first fall meeting to assist with renewals. You may also register for workshops there.

Tools & supplies

Tools and supplies are sold by the club at most meetings. It is a good idea to contact the executive member in advance of the meeting for specific tools and supplies.

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please see Carlos

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Visit the Toronto Bonsai Society's web site, at:
www.torontobonsai.org

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