



## Kitchener-Waterloo Bonsai Society



### Newsletter

October 2005

www.kwbonsai.com

#### President's Message

This month's meeting will be a fall pruning workshop. We will discuss how and why and what to do to your trees to prepare them for the winter. Fall is a great time to observe the structure of your trees after they have lost their leaves. Major styling can be done at this time without much bleeding of the trees sap. This is a good time to prune and wire your trees so you can concentrate on repotting in spring. For the meeting, bring in a tree to work on, the more overgrown the better! Bring your tools and some plastic for the tables.

The Guelph show went well although attendance was low with about fifty people for the weekend. The landscapes looked great from the Guelph summer workshops. I think we should do a landscape workshop in the spring. I will look into getting some large plastic trays for the club. You might want to start collecting a group of trees for your forest. I think I will try using a mirror as the water and glue the rocks to the surface, this might give a realistic reflection. Some other ideas for a unique landscape might be a golf green surrounded by trees, a river or gorge, a rocky cliff, a miniature garden with hedges, a B.C. forest with a totem pole, a scene from a Disney movie or an apple orchard. Use your imagination, I think we could come up with some unique ideas.

My fertilizer brew continues to smell really bad and will be staying outside for the winter. In spring I will make the fertilizer balls and dry them. I will try them on some of the lesser trees as a test to see if they work.

David Johnson, the president of the Toronto club has given me some DVD's of their clubs workshop's this summer. These will be available in the club library.

Last year I put all my trees in the ground and surrounded them

with a large dog cage, this keep the rabbits from nibbling my trees. You may want to start thinking about winter protection for your trees, as they should go in the ground soon.

See you at the next meeting, Nigel

#### Upcoming Events

**Next General Meeting:  
October 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm**

**Toronto Bonsai Society Show and Sales**, October 22 and 23, time and location TBA

**Toronto Japanese Garden Club**, 53<sup>rd</sup> Flower and Bonsai show Awards, Displays, and Sales Sunday, Oct. 30, 12:30-4:30 pm Japanese-Canadian Cultural Centre 6 Garamond Court, Don Mills, Kobayashi Hall, call 416-425-3161 Admission \$5, 12 and under free

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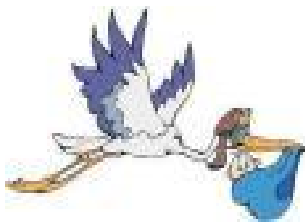
#### Time and Place

Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month (except July, August and December) at 7:30 pm at the Adult Recreation Centre, corner of King and Allen Streets in Waterloo.

#### Zen Wisdom

If you have no patience to grow trees, grow potatoes.

## Important Announcement



Congratulations to Mrs. And Mr. Saunders to the birth of their son Julian J. on Sunday October 9<sup>th</sup> at 10:15 pm. Mom and the 6 lb 4oz potensai are doing fine and were quickly released into the care of Papa Nigel.

## Tips and Tricks

During the last meeting, Leszek mentioned a technique he uses to trunk chop trees, especially larches. It results in excellent taper and none of the cluster of branches at the very top.

The source of the article is

<http://www.bonsaisite.com/chopping.html> and here is a full reprint.

### Trunk Chopping Potensai...

### *The Bonsai Site...*

Written by [Brian Inglis](#), Queensland, Australia

Trunk chopping has a twofold purpose. First to reduce the height of the tree and secondly to induce taper into the trunk. I have developed an improvement on the usual method in the case of the formal upright style. **It should be remembered that the formal upright style requires that the tree has a perfectly straight trunk** and the usual technique is not conducive to this especially if the trunk is chopped a number of times.

Note that with the standard method, the trunk is cut and tapered



to a branch which is then wired up to become the new leader as shown here. This will always result in a bump in the trunk where the new leader starts because it is the branch that is bent.

Technically this means that bonsai is not in the formal upright style.

I take it a step further. The branch on the right is destined to become the

new trunk of the tree.

Instead of bending the branch up, I make an exaggerated deep concave cut into the trunk **below the branch** and bend the trunk! This serves to position the new leader directly above the centre of the trunk below it, thus maintaining the integrity of the formal upright style. When healing is complete, the trunk is perfectly straight and excellent taper is achieved.



### Mike's Musings

"Cut it here"

"Or here"

"If you cut it here, you get better taper"

"This is too long, too boring"

"Or maybe here?"

Well, some of you know what happened – nothing. I took the poor elm (uncut) home from our meeting knowing less than before.

Two days later I was in my garden looking at the other elms I had planted near the fence to fatten the trunks. 3' wisps had grown from the top, where I had cut them last year. The leaves had grown 4x bigger than that "other" elm. The plants were healthy, bushy, lush.

So why was I worried about cutting the elm at the meeting? It seems it doesn't really matter with an elm potensai – the tree won't be a piece of art for quite some time anyway, and being a vigorous weed that it is, it can be restyled readily if it ever becomes one.

I guess my worry is the result of a certain insecurity that came from cutting a ficus benjaminia down to size only to find that the poor things don't like that at all and simply expire. Or from being a peaceful and gentle type who doesn't like to hurt things, poor elm trees included. (There's gotta be something in it for the Zen Wisdom silliness on page one!) Or simply from lack of experience.

And since experience can only be gained by doing, I'll whet my cutter right now. Only question is when.

"Anytime in the Fall..."

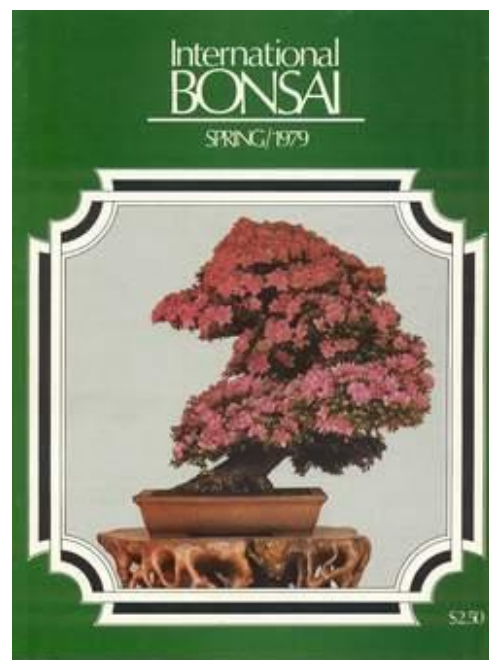
"...but only after the leaves fall off."

"Spring, definitely spring, before bud burst."

"Or maybe now?"

### Book review: International Bonsai Magazine, Vol 1, Number 1, Issue 1

This is not a real book review. But I found in my collection the very first issue of International Bonsai from 1979. William N. Valavanis wrote in the foreword that his aim was "to fill the vacuum which currently exists for educational information on bonsai culture, care and enjoyment." He goes on and says that "we believe English language bonsai enthusiasts need a professionally produced bonsai periodical which they will enjoy reading, understand and use."



Now, 26 years later, and International Bonsai still going strong, I believe he has managed to achieve his goals. I, for one, look forward to each new issue in the Club library.

I thought it might be fun to have a quick look at that first issue of the magazine from 26 years ago. The first issue was exclusively focused on Azaleas. The first article already featured the clear, concise and detailed line drawings that make IB so attractive to me. Other authors were Doris Froning, Chase Rosade and Shin Young, names that have had staying power with IB. In the closing article Keith Scott writes some words of wisdom that hold true today: "The artistic element of bonsai is among the most difficult to learn and about which so little is written."

## Member List as at September 2005

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