



YAMA KI NEWSLETTER

Learning from each other Sharing with the community”

May

2004

MAY 1ST GUIDED SHOPPING TRIP TO OLIVER’S NURSERY 10:00 AM SHOPPING - 1:00 PM CRITIQUE & STYLING SUGGESTIONS

Arrive at 11 AM to have the best selection to choose trees for bonsai. Please park on the road, not in the parking lot. BRING A FOLDING CHAIR. Bring lunch if you wish. *Berni*, and anyone else whose opinion you value, will help you make your selection(s). The Design Seminar will begin at 1 PM. *Berni* will help you determine the rough design, and discuss the aspects to highlight for each tree. No wiring or potting, but bring ribbon or string to mark branches to remove or branches to save. We will work only on material purchased from Oliver's who is giving us a 10 percent discount.

The learning objective is this: As you share in the selection process, analysis, and initial design of numerous trees, you reinforce your ability to choose material for yourself in the future. These trees can be brought to future workshops for further work. Since we must work outdoors, the event will be cancelled if there is heavy rain. If in doubt, call one of the Weather Hot Lines on the cover page. Directions to Oliver's are on the last page.

LASDON BONSAI EXHIBIT - MAY 15, 2004

Surprise ! On the second Saturday in May – May 15th – we will have a YAMA KI event. The surprise has two components: one that our date is actually the second Saturday of the month (a YAMA KI date since 1977) and the second that the event is a member show.

The Lasdon Park, Arboretum, & Veterans Memorial, 2610 Amawalk, Route 35, Somers, NY (travel directions on page 6) , is hosting a YAMA KI bonsai exhibit. It will be held on the day of their Annual Plant Sale conducted by the Friends of Lasdon Park. You may even purchase some new material. Attendance runs into the hundreds.

Prepare your tree(s) for a formal show; see article on page x. elsewhere in this NEWSLETTER. Trees with wiring will be displayed since part of the purpose of this exhibit is educational. We had a call for bonsai to be evaluated at the last few meetings, but if you could not bring a tree, come to Lasdon with your tree(s) by 10:00a.m. You may enter more than one tree. Bring a card with the name of the tree, its years in training, and if you know its actually age, include that. It is your election whether or not to identify yourself as owner.

Bernie Gastrich, chairperson, indicates that docents are needed. Call him at 914-764-5022 to let him know about the trees you are bringing and about some time that you will be a docent between 10:00a.m. and 4:00p.m. Lasdon Park generally closes at 4:00p.m. so be prepared to remove your tree at 4:00.

Bring a folding chair and do bring your picnic lunch, sun block, and a hat. The day is on rain or shine.

DIRECTIONS: Take I-684 to exit 6, and head west on Route 35; the park entrance is three miles ahead on left. Or take the Taconic State Parkway to Route 202 exit and head east on Route 202. Follow to Route 35 and turn left; the park is three miles ahead on the right.

BACK TO BASICS WITH BERNI

Berni Gastrich

HOW TO CHOOSE A MATERIAL TREE

We are talking here about going to a local plant nursery where the material was grown for landscape or rock garden use, as opposed to a bonsai nursery, with a material that has been somewhat pre-trained or at least selected with bonsai in mind. The better plant nurseries often have special clones of familiar species which may be dwarf, or have special foliage size or color. The problem is that most have multiple stems coming out of the ground.

What to look for:

1. Small foliage size. Big leaves or needles look ridiculous on a small tree and cannot always be reduced;
2. A good trunk, single or double, with taper and curves if possible;
3. A good root base if possible.

The above things are basic and almost impossible to change.

4. A good variety of branches on all sides as you go up the main trunk;
5. The foliage all along the branches, not just at the tip;
6. Some sort of a WOW! E.g. special foliage color, shine, texture etc.;
7. Hardiness, if for outdoor use;
8. Flexibility of branches if possible;
9. Price? If it has all of the above is worth a lot. If it has very few of the above, it is no bargain.

PREPARING YOUR BONSAI FOR DISPLAY

Bring you plants with the following preparation:

- ✓ Groom your trees by removing any surface debris including twigs, leaves, weeds, etc.
- ✓ Replace or freshen moss or other ground cover
- ✓ Polish pots by removing mineral deposits, soil and water spots
- ✓ Bring mats of a neutral color (e.g., bamboo or grasscloth) or stands for positioning your bonsai
- ✓ Accent plants are welcome as they are a traditional part of a bonsai display

**CRAIG COUSSINS LECTURE/DEMONSTRATION & WORKSHOP
APRIL 24, 2004**



Craig Coussins lamented that most bonsai artists on tour are presented with the plant material at the time of the demonstration, rather than the preceding day. Artists would prefer having the proper time to study the tree to exhaust all its potentialities and to then do some cleaning and pruning. This would allow more time for actual teaching during the presentation. The workshop and observer members had the advantage of learning much more on a group and one-to-one level.



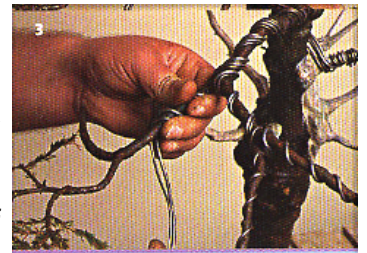
Moisten the foliage, even without a sprayer



Reviewing the "finished" tree

Since the *Cryptomeria* used for the demonstration had a very straight trunk with no taper, *Craig* cut the trunk at what he thought was the right proportional height and then jinned the new top. He decided the jin should not be the apex, and bent a branch to serve this purpose.

He then removed branches, pruned back the foliage, and wired the remaining branches. *Craig* showed us a clever technique to wire the secondary branches to the tips of every twig. See page 58 of his book, "Totally Bonsai" (London: Quintet Publishing 2001) and in his latest book, "Bonsai School", Sterling Publishing). He took thin wires appropriate for the twigs and bundled them together as if they were one thick wire. He then wrapped the wires around the branch as he would for bending purposes, making sure he had enough of the individual wire lengths to reach the tips of each of the twigs. The number of wires used depends on the number of twigs. This technique should only be used on younger material or with initial styling.



Craig Coussins' web-site address is: www.bonsaiinformation.com. He has volunteered to answer bonsai related emailed questions, if you indicate you are a YAMA KI member.

Unfortunately, because of last minute drop-outs, only four members participated in the workshop. Fortunately for those members, they had ample precious personal time with *Craig*,



Craig studying JoAnn's twin tree planting



Craig suggesting changing the arrangement



Craig recommending a drastic restyling of Lucille's pine (Adam helping wiring)

including hands-on assistance. The four participants were wise to have brought more than one tree each.

GLEANINGS FROM CRAIG COUSSINS LECTURE/DEMONSTRATION

- ✿ Do not shari *Cryptomeria* unless the tree is huge. The wood, however, is good for jinning.
- ✿ Although *Cryptomeria* is winter hearty, it should be protected from strong sun and wind.
- ✿ The root system is a mirror image of the tree (although condensed and compressed), i.e., if there are no roots on one side, there will be no branches on that side.
- ✿ When selecting a tree at nurseries where the roots are buried deep in the soil or when collecting, look for low branches. Low branches usually indicate that the navari is good.
- ✿ When cutting while styling, spray frequently to reduce browning.
- ✿ On small limbs use Kional on the tips and cut paste on the trunk and big branches. This will prevent dieback.
- ✿ When cutting ficus and other tropicals, place a small cloth under the cut to prevent sap from staining the bark.
- ✿ Craig insists that all cuts must be sealed.

MIDATLANTIC 'S 21st SPRING FESTIVAL

How quickly the experiences shared at a dynamic bonsai symposium move into the background of our lives. Yet every time we water our trees, look for pests, plan a redesign, or consider a new purchase, we revisit educational moments (formal and informal) from the weekend.

Unusual, and frequently challenging, trees were designed as bonsai by *Hiro Yoshi Yamaji*, *Kenji Miyata*, *Craig Coussins*, and *Don Torppa*. All were raffled after the final presentations by their artists. Some



Don Torppa with pre-bonsai
5-needle Pine



A few hours later

gleanings from their lectures appear elsewhere in this issue of the NEWSLETTER. YAMA KI had a good representation at the weekend, but unfortunately none of the trees came home with any of our members. Vendors (some returning, some new to MidAtlantic) offered a wealth of material from pre-bonsai to elegant fully-styled trees, from Shohin to four-footers; containers that were domestic, imported, hand-crafted, machined; tools; books, periodicals; and accessories. The Saturday night auction was a quickly-paced, humorous entertainment which followed dinner.

Many attendees went home with bargains in every category and well-styled bonsai.



Kenji Miyata looking



This is what he saw!

Try to plan your calendar for next year's symposium April 14-16, 2005. Future issues of the NEWSLETTER will bring you information about the artists who have already made a commitment for their participation.



Lots of raffles were sold for Hiroyoshi Yamaji 's ponderosa pine



Hiroyoshi Yamaji explains his choices while Pauline Muth wires



Ready for raffling



Craig Coussins' cedar elm - before styling



Cedar elm - after



Craig Coussins' making a point styling a Hinoki cypress



Craig's cypress ready for raffling

YAMA KI'S ENTRIES TO THE CLUBS' BONSAI EXHIBIT



Gail Therrien's Satsuki azalea



Mike Pollock's Korean hornbeam



Berni Gastrich's Hinoki cypress

← Sorry you can't see the trunk, the camera's flash not did work. This tree received the Rosade Studio Award for Excellence in Design at the Saturday night gala dinner.

GLEANINGS

Craig Cousins:

✿ For extreme branch bending *Craig* uses veterinarian (self-sticking stretchable gauze) tape to wrap the branch. He then places a layer of wire parallel to the branch and covers the branch with a second layer of tape.

- ✿ Early in the season, use 0-10-10 fertilizer to prevent early soft foliage development. In the autumn again lower nitrogen content for good root development.

Don Torppa re: 5-Needle Pine::

- ✿ Trim the lower candles, but not the upper, until you have good ramification.
- ✿ Removing old needles in the Fall weakens the tree thru the winter. Wait until Spring.
- ✿ Remove old needles by hand, new needles with scissors.
- ✿ Spray pines with lime sulphur as they go into winter protection; spray the entire tree and trunk (protect soil).
- ✿ In Spring, coming out of dormancy, spray again.
- ✿ When pruning bud clusters, leave two on the lower branches, three on the upper branches.
- ✿ In March/April remove first growth; in the Fall clean out weaker growth.
- ✿ *Don* uses organic feed cakes to fertilize in the Spring, After needles harden, he switches to liquid fertilizers, e.g., Miracle Grow, Peters 20-20-20, etc.

Kenji Miyata:

- ✿ When styling you must anticipate future growth, e.g., consider removing older branches and leave young branches for future growth.
- ✿ Do not create shari under a jin on pines. Pines heal naturally.
- ✿ To check proper size wire to use, press the wire against the branch, if it bends, the wire is too thin. Try a thicker wire.
- ✿ It is okay to unwrap aluminum wire; copper wire should be cut to remove.

ANNUAL DUES NOTICE

Our fiscal year starts on May 1st and ends April 30th. Renewal dues are now due for the new fiscal year. If you joined after January 1st, your dues covers your membership until April 30, 2005.

At the last Board meeting dues were increased to \$25.00 for individual members and \$35.00 for family membership (a \$5.00 increase). Please mail your dues check payable to the YAMA KI BONSAI SOCIETY at the return address on the cover page. Please include any change of address and if you have an internet connection, please include your email address.

DIRECTIONS TO OLIVER NURSERIES
1159 Bronson Road at the junction of Bronson and Sturges Roads.

WESTBOUND (From New Haven to New York)

Via CONNECTICUT TURNPIKE (I-95) Take exit 20 (Bronson Road). From there, the nursery is .8 mile. At the bottom of the ramp turn right onto Bronson Road. Continue straight through two stop signs. After the second stop sign the nursery is immediately on the left.

Via MERRITT PARKWAY (Rt. 15) Take exit 44 (Rte 58). From there, the nursery is 4.5 miles. At bottom of ramp turn left. Proceed to stop light at Rte 58. Make a left and go under the Merritt to the first stop light. Make a right there on Congress street following it for roughly 2 miles to the second stop sign. (The first stop sign is at Burr street). At the second stop sign, turn left onto Hillside Road and continue straight to the first stop sign. Bear left down the hill staying on Hillside Road. Continue straight through 2 more stop signs until the road ends at Bronson Road. Turn left onto Bronson and the nursery is .6 miles on the right.

EASTBOUND (From New York to New Haven)

Via (CONNECTICUT TURNPIKE (I-95) take exit 21 (Mill Plain Road). From there the nursery is .8 mile. Turn left at the foot of the ramp onto Mill Plain Road, passing under the turnpike. At the first stop sign, turn left onto Sturges Road. In about 100 yards, bear right at the first intersection, continuing on Sturges Road through the first stop sign and across a stone bridge to a second stop sign. At that stop sign, turn right, and continue .3 mile to the nursery on the left.

Via MERRITT PARKWAY (Rt. 15) Take exit 42 (Weston Road, Rte 57). From there the nursery is 6.2 miles. At bottom of ramp turn left at stop light (Weston Rd, Rte. 57). Immediately bear left to four-way stop sign. Go straight through stop sign on Weston Road (leaving Daybreak Nurseries on your right) until it ends at Cross Highway. Turn left at the three-way stop sign onto Cross Highway. Go straight through the first stop sign to the second stop sign at Bayberry Lane. Turn right onto Bayberry Lane and continue straight until the road ends at Long Lots Road (Hulls Farm Road). Turn left onto Long Lots and follow this until it ends at Bronson Road. Turn right on Bronson and the nursery is 1.1 miles on the right.

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COMING EVENTS

May	1	Trip to Oliver's Nursery & Afternoon Workshop
May	15	Member Bonsai Exhibit at Lasdon Park & Arboretum
June	26	<i>Colin Lewis</i> lecture/Demonstration
July	10	Annual Meeting & Auction

WEATHER HOTLINES

Connecticut	<i>Nicki Wallhofer</i>	(203) 359-9229
New York City	<i>Rhoda Kleiman</i>	(212) 724-7840
Westchester	<i>Selma Bernstein</i>	(914) 633-8338

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