



NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

Green Square Community Hall

3 Joynton Avenue Zetland

7pm Tuesday 13 Feb 2018

At the December 2017 meeting we all clapped when I announced that Sue would come from Goulburn to give us a talk on pines. Now we have lost our chance to hear our teacher and mentor and see our cherished friend.

"Tribute to Sue" was compiled by Roz Young, January 2018. email roz@rozyoung.com

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COMMITTEE

Patron	Sue Brennan
President	Bryan
Vice President	TBA
Secretary	David
Treasurer	Chris
Newsletter Editor	Roz
Librarian	Les
Committee	Frank & John

MEMBERSHIP

Full Membership	\$40
Concession	\$25
Family	\$55
Pensioner	\$25

SCBC wishes to thank Sydney City Council for their continued support for our club by providing the hall at a reduced rate.

A Tribute to Our Patron Sue Brennan

BY LEE

Sue was special, so very special, someone who pretty much knew it all but was never a know-all. Her passion was bonsai - and humanity. Sue loved nothing better than passing on bonsai information and with her keen intelligence, wide ranging interests and artistic ability, she was very valued by all who knew her. We all benefited from Sue's knowledge and enthusiasm about bonsai and willing hands and heart everywhere, but more than that she was a person who listened. She listened to what people were saying and responded accordingly. Her input and empathy were invaluable and her loss is incalculable.



Bonsai artist & expert



Teacher 'extraordinaire' for everyone interested in bonsai

As a dear friend, as a mother, as a well respected member of the bonsai community, Sue will be greatly missed for a long time to come. Sincere sympathy is extended to Inez, her much loved daughter, and to Frank, her ex-partner who was always a part of her life and to her sisters.

Sue, we salute you with love, friendship, admiration and sorrow.



Multi-award winner for bonsai



Mentor, friend and full of humorous anecdotal stories

One doesn't replace a Sue Brennan. You thank your lucky stars that she came into your life and try to honour her by improving your trees and your interactions with other bonsai enthusiasts and being willing to bring a bit of knowledge to those who don't know bonsai. That's the way to embrace Sue's legacy.

MEETING SUE & HER PASSION FOR BONSAI

Neville met Sue around 2000

Around 2000 I saw a sign in the *Pentimento* book/card shop gift shop. Sue used to put bonsai in the window. One day she added a little sign saying “bonsai lessons”. These lessons were given in the shed of a little nursery in Petersham. After a few lessons she talked me into joining “Eastern Suburbs Bonsai Club” with meetings at Kingsford. I am still an avid bonsai enthusiast and I will miss Sue terribly.

Lee met Sue after 30 year bonsai break

I was just getting back into bonsai after a 30 year lapse and joined Sue Brennan’s bonsai course at a local Petersham nursery in 2001. A year later I was pushing her to come to a Sydney City Bonsai Club [then Eastern Suburbs Bonsai Society] meeting. The rest is history. Sue came, Sue joined and Sue plunged into the joy of imparting as much knowledge as she could to all of the club members. We got police stories mixed with information on informal uprights, drug bust tales amidst root over rock and cascade styles.

“Information and humour poured out of Sue as she willingly tried to get us on the bonsai bandwagon. “

Sue’s generosity drew me in - Roz

I wandered up to the Sydney City Bonsai Club in April 2013 never having done bonsai before. After a couple of meetings Sue took me on a nursery crawl to buy some trees and invited me to her home to work on them. She gave me so much of her time and I was nothing but a beginner. Five months later I was on the SCBC Committee and editor of the newsletter. I said “I can’t do this – I know nothing about bonsai”. Sue just said “We will help you!” and later in the year when I started to enjoy the task she smiled “I know how to pick them”.

She never stopped teaching me about bonsai over the years and when I went overseas for several weeks at a time she took care of all of my bonsai – so generous with her knowledge and her time. So good with her stories and so much fun to do things with.

John met Sue via Easter Show

“I first met Sue at the 2007 Royal Easter Show where she gave one of her many ‘talks on Bonsai’. Although I

was not new to growing bonsai, I found her very extensive knowledge and enthusiasm contagious and so started to attend the monthly SCBC meetings.



Sue, Neville Lee (in background) at 2014 Easter Show Stand

Over the years I observed that she shared her generosity and pleasant nature with everyone she came into contact with. I, like many other bonsai enthusiasts, will be indebted to Sue and she will be fondly remembered by us all.” *John Brown*



Sue’s passion for bonsai was simply contagious!

I don’t want to kill my bonsai present

I was given a twig of a Juniper in a small bonsai pot by my dad near Christmas time, I think 2012. Not knowing what to do to keep it alive (all of my acquaintances have admitted to killing their bonsai), I determined to find out how to keep mine alive.

My first meeting with the Sydney City Bonsai Club was early 2013, Sue was giving a demonstration of the soil she makes up for her plants. Slim, enthusiastic, great sense of humour, energetic, and happily sharing her love of bonsai.

Even though she must have shrunk back in horror that my little plant could possibly be called a bonsai, never the less was happy and supportive of my wanting to learn, and has guided me through the principles of the art.

Anita Beuthien

INSPIRATIONAL TEACHER

Sue was a rare breed of teacher who taught from the heart

BY DOUG EVANS

We will never be able to repay the huge debt of gratitude owing to the late Sue Brennan. Her long-term commitment to Sydney Bonsai Club inspired so many of us. Her knowledge and expertise were given freely to all. The atmosphere at the club was friendly and fun, and Sue made sure it was always a productive and informative meeting.

She was the rare breed of teacher who taught from the heart. She was a master of technique and an expert horticulturist. Her trees reflect her unique creative vision. Sue would often surprise you by imparting information about obscure and unusual species, as her knowledge of trees was immense.

Sue would drive those of us without cars to nurseries, meetings and workshops. She wanted nothing in return, only to promote the art of bonsai that she loved. The shock of losing such a vital friend, with so much to contribute, is immense. My deepest condolences to Sue's family. I hope the trees are beautiful wherever you are.

Sue's virtual prune of a bonsai or does she?

FROM SCBC MAY 2010 NEWSLETTER – TONY WILSON



Before virtual prune



First branch to be removed



Sue makes more virtual cuts; this is fun and safe; its all just theory right?

Can we just stop now, the tree looks great, just needs some wiring? - No!

O.K. Lets keep going then.

Another virtual transformation, the tree looks even more interesting.

Now can we stop? No.



Sue then suggested we should cut this tree in half - And she did it!



Here Sue holds up the new bonsai that was developed from the top part of the trunk.

What a beautiful little tree - what happened to the roots I hear you ask?

Sue points out where she cut root over rock to regrow the bottom



This is what happens when you are innovative and know what you are doing!

SUE'S FAMOUS DEATH CUT!

Sue was a bonsai enthusiast since the 70s when she started with seeds collected from figs in the Domain, Sydney. Her passion was mainly self taught and studied under the Koreshoffs achieving advanced status. Sue had a strong artistic streak, a keen intelligence and interest in how trees worked and how best to make them into bonsai. She loved a number of species but black pines were her passion and she developed special ways of dealing with them to minimise the size of the needles.



"While I suspect she may have taken a secret delight in watching peoples faces when she performed one of her famous death-cuts on some poor demo tree, this was all part of the show....and usually good for the tree in the long run....if not for the tree owner's blood pressure at the time."

Pete & Les

*We all know that look!
This tree is in for a Death
Cut!*



Is Phillip thinking -So much for all the pruning and wiring I did on the canopy!



Rebecca looks on stunned- as Sue and Phillip discuss future directions for the tree. Anxiety is not uncommon after one of Sue's subtle prunes

Newbie Roz and her Melaleuca



Well as a newbie, I thought I could make a bonsai from this until Sue saw it.

"But if you cut it all off will it re-shoot?"

"Of course Roz - it is a Melaleuca for goodness sake."

Phillip's tree gets the chop



*What about a cut here and here?
Phillip looks a bit uncertain.*



Six weeks later



Well it wouldn't have looked like this if it wasn't for Sue

ROYAL EASTER SHOW & BONSAI

It's Show time – “Time for Public to See Real Bonsai” - Lee

Sue exhibited at the Royal for many years and after the first couple of years she decided that a bonsai stand was needed to introduce the public to ‘real’ bonsai. Her legendary exploits getting the Royal Easter stand up and running, her dedication, the hours and kilometres she put into it. She was a one woman wonder. She was present for most of the 8 day shifts, holding forth on the stand, moving around the judging exhibition telling people more about bonsai and giving demos on stage. Sue was never at a loss for words or enthusiasm.



RAS 2010

Sue's Trees won many RAS awards through the years



2008 RAS



2009 RAS



2014 RAS



2016 RAS

Anita reflects on her wonderful rapport particularly with children

Working on the clubs Easter Show stand, I could also observe her wonderful rapport with the public and particularly with children. Not only as a bonsai guide, but to all who share her guiding principles of caring helping and enjoying good company, she will be remembered and very much missed.

She would put you out of your comfort zone! But what a buzz! - Roz

Sitting with her at the Easter Show was just a buzz. She would attract so many people to the bonsai stand and keep their attention and then out of the blue would say to me – “Take your apron off and go and sit in the audience and go into the flower arrangement competition” – something I never did in my life! So right out of my comfort zone, I did it, and won! She was so inspiring, resilient and always with endless energy. For me Sue is irreplaceable and is so sadly missed.



2017 RAS -JB Pine was her ultimate favourite species.
Note! - Her little saotome on the left was stolen with stand and all. When visiting Sue last year she was planning to thoroughly make another saotome theft proof with wires, ties, bark and stone. It was not going to go anywhere!

Constantine

I cannot believe that Sue is gone. My heart broke reading your email and I feel shattered. She was my teacher, my mentor and above all my friend.

THE WORLD IS A LESSER PLACE WITHOUT SUE

A Special Friend -Lee



To me Sue was a very special friend outside of bonsai as well as in. Her death leaves an incalculable loss to me and to the bonsai world in general.

2005 Bridge Climb

It was my lovely idea to attend a 1 hour council run 'basic bonsai care' course and just see who was telling what to the attendees. I asked Sue if she wanted to come along and got a quick YES. After booking Sue and I fronted up, determined to remain incognito and silent.

We did too... until a bloke came in and apologised profusely but someone had neglected to tell the trainer that he had a course so he was no where to be found. I piped up and said Sue was an expert tutor on bonsai basics and did he want Sue to conduct the hour course.

And she did. Sue rescued trees from being kept inside, saved them from being put in the direct sunlight all day immediately, explained as much about the basics of soil, water and trimming as can be done in an hour with no aids. We got three new bonsai hobbyists from the escapade. [Lee had many escapades with Sue including stuffing bonsai in suitcases for airplanes and trying to save Bryn from eating rat poison when on nursery visit.]

One felt immediately comfortable asking questions - Anna Lee

Sue was an inspiration to me as I started my interest in bonsai more seriously by joining the group. Both Sue and Lee seem to work in tandem in helping newcomers settle in. Their wealth of knowledge had no boundaries. Sue was so down to earth and shared her vast knowledge readily. One felt immediately comfortable asking questions and absorbing her knowledge she so readily shared.

David Peirce

She had a great depth of knowledge and enthusiasm for bonsai and was generous and enthusiastic in passing on that knowledge. Greatly missed.

Sue was magic - Peter & Les

We first met Sue more years ago than we care to remember, when she was the guest speaker at our old (and now sadly disbanded) club, The Western Suburbs Bonsai Society.

Our first impressions were that here was a woman that not only knew her stuff, but also knew how to communicate it.

And this opinion was only reinforced in the years since then.

Sue was a brilliant teacher. She treated everyone with respect, no matter how inexperienced they were (or how hopelessly overconfident in my case).

And she'd throw in a few anecdotes or jokes as well just to make things more entertaining.

This was part of her magic- she could explain things simply- not just what to do, but why you should do it.

And her depth of knowledge was encyclopedic- she was bonsai's answer to Google.

It has been a joy to have known Sue and an honour to have been her friend.

The world is a lesser place without her in it.



Sue's magic always captured an audience

Chris

Sue was generous, outgoing, gregarious, knowledgeable, sympathetic, patient and dedicated to any task she took on.

Thank you Sue for the chance to know you – from us all!

THE WORLD IS A LESSER PLACE WITHOUT SUE



Commemorative sketch commissioned by Neville Althaus, Lee Wright and Roz Young and presented to Inez Brennan

But Heaven won't ever
be the same!
