

# The Bergen Bonsai Society

SEPT 2021 Newsletter

Meeting: **Sat –Sun. 09/17-18**

Place: **Fall Festival VAN SAUN PARK**  
216 Forest Ave. Paramus, NJ



**SEPT 18 –19**  
**FALL FESTIVAL**  
**VAN SAUN PARK**

**The Bergen Bonsai Society**  
Incorporated  
P.O. Box 822  
Teaneck, New Jersey 07666  
Website: [BergenBonsai.com](http://BergenBonsai.com)



## Year 2021 Programs Mark Your Calendar



<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT AND/OR GUEST ARTIST</u>	<u>AM MTG</u>	<u>AFT MTG</u>	<u>EVE MT G</u>	<u>AWAY MTG</u>
January 17	<u>ZOOM MEETING</u>	<u>X</u>			
February 28	<u>PICK UP DAY FOR PURCHASE OF SOIL AND WIRE</u>	<u>X</u>			
March 21	<u>ZOOM MEETING</u>	<u>X</u>			
April 18	<u>TEANECK— BOB MAHLER WORKSHOP</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
May 16	<u>TEANECK— CLUB WORKSHOP</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
June 27	<u>TEANECK —CLUB WORKSHOP</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
July 18	<u>TEANECK — TROPICAL REPOTTING WORKSHOP</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
August 15	<u>TEANECK — CLUB WORKSHOP</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
September 10-12	<u>ROCHESTER NY — US NATIONAL BONSAI EXHIBITION</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		<u>X</u>
September 18,19	<u>FALL FESTIVAL — VAN SAUN PARK/PICNIC</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		<u>X</u>
October 17	<u>TEANECK — Tentative — BOB MAHLER WORKSHOP</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
November 21	<u>TEANECK —CLUB SHOW</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
December	<u>Date Tentative— CLUB HOLIDAY LUNCHEON</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		<u>X</u>

\* Indicates a change in date, event or time, since previous Newsletter

**NOTES**

1. All meetings are on Sundays

It's still mostly summer outside, but the beginnings of fall weather are starting to happen. We don't know yet how the Delta strain or other evolutions of Covid will affect our meetings but we will roll with the events as they happen and do the best we can. In the near future our Board of directors will be starting to discuss how to improve the club in a broad spectrum of ways and an important part of that will be input and ideas from all of us. In the meantime, the following is the program for the rest of the year as best as we know it.

### **1) Last meeting, August 17 at the greenhouse**

About 10 of us met and several members brought in trees and worked on them

### **2) Club trip to Rochester for the US National Exhibition Sept 10 to 12**

The number of people allowed into the exhibition space has been reduced because of Covid and as a result there are no more tickets being sold. There will be no at the door sales. Our club, however, still has two previously purchased full weekend passes which are available to paid club members, at cost, who are interested in going. They will be offered to outside nonmembers if they are not used by us.

The club's trip is leaving by car Friday afternoon, staying at a hotel, attending the exhibition Sat and Sun and visiting Valavnis' nursery before returning home Sunday. Major expenses of transportation, admission and two hotel nights will be shared equally. Contact me ASAP at 201 655 0193 or by email at lenschwartz3@gmail.com if interested.

### **3) Bergen County. Fall festival at Van Saun Park, Saturday/Sunday Sept 18&19**

We have participated in this event from its inception four or five years ago with our own kiosk tent and bonsai display. Our purpose is to promote bonsai and information about our club. At times we have also attracted new members.

**Instead of our usual picnic, this year the club will be hosting a free brunch for members and their friends who are at the festival on Sunday around 11 am. We hope everyone comes and shares the experience.**

There is a lot of effort required to set up the tent, the tables, and the trees on Saturday around 9 am and to take down the whole thing around 4 pm on Sunday. We need a crew of about 4 or more people for both situations. Also, we need members give out information and stay with the trees for two- or three-hour time spans during the entire weekend. We also need you to bring in and show your best trees for our exhibit. Please stay tuned for additional information as we get closer to Sept 18 and keep some free time during the weekend to help and also come for the brunch.

**4) October 17, Sunday, 10 am: Bob Malher will be our guest artist at the greenhouse doing a BYO workshop.**

Bob is well known to us from previous visits in years past and most recently in April. He is bringing with him his talents, knowledge, experience, and skills that he uses to help us improve our trees. Bring in your trees that he has worked on in the past for further refinement and or bring in new material. We will follow our usual good deal: members pay a \$20 flat rate for as many trees as you bring, \$10 if you only have one tree. Those who register with me by calling or emailing forehand get to see Bob first, followed by the order that you sign in at the workshop.

We hope that the weather will permit us to still work outside. If this is not possible, we will have to decide whether an inside workshop is safe enough at the time.

**5) Nov 21, club show hopefully inside the greenhouse**

**6) Dec, hopefully a year end luncheon**





# One became two

*Martin Nielsen divides a Japanese maple into two new trees*

Text and photography: Martin Nielsen

Martin describes his work with a Japanese maple where one tree becomes two. It's a tree with a fine nebari grown from a seed in Japan. A tree that came to Europe almost 30 years ago, during which time it had a number of different owners until, about 10 years ago, it finally became Martin's tree

I acquired the tree from one of my old bonsai friends, Torben Brenfeldt. I think it was in exchange for trees with some shohin potential. Even back then I had an idea of what was needed to be done to exploit the potential of the tree. It was a great tree, but it also had a problem and that would take time to solve.

The process started with the tree being divided into two by an air layer. After that they became two very different trees. The first tree could be a classic formal upright style, chokkan perhaps, a tree that has its foundation on the old roots. The second tree was more its own style, maybe a rock-grown bonsai, a tree that began like an air layer with only a few roots. Here we follow the progress of the two trees over



The Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum* 'deshoyo') seen before work started in 2012.  
Below right: I repotted the tree in spring



a period of about 8-16 years, from when they were separated and each planted into specially selected pots. We'll then see where they are today with still many years before a 'finished' tree is achieved. We then look into the future where an exhibition might beckon, who knows?

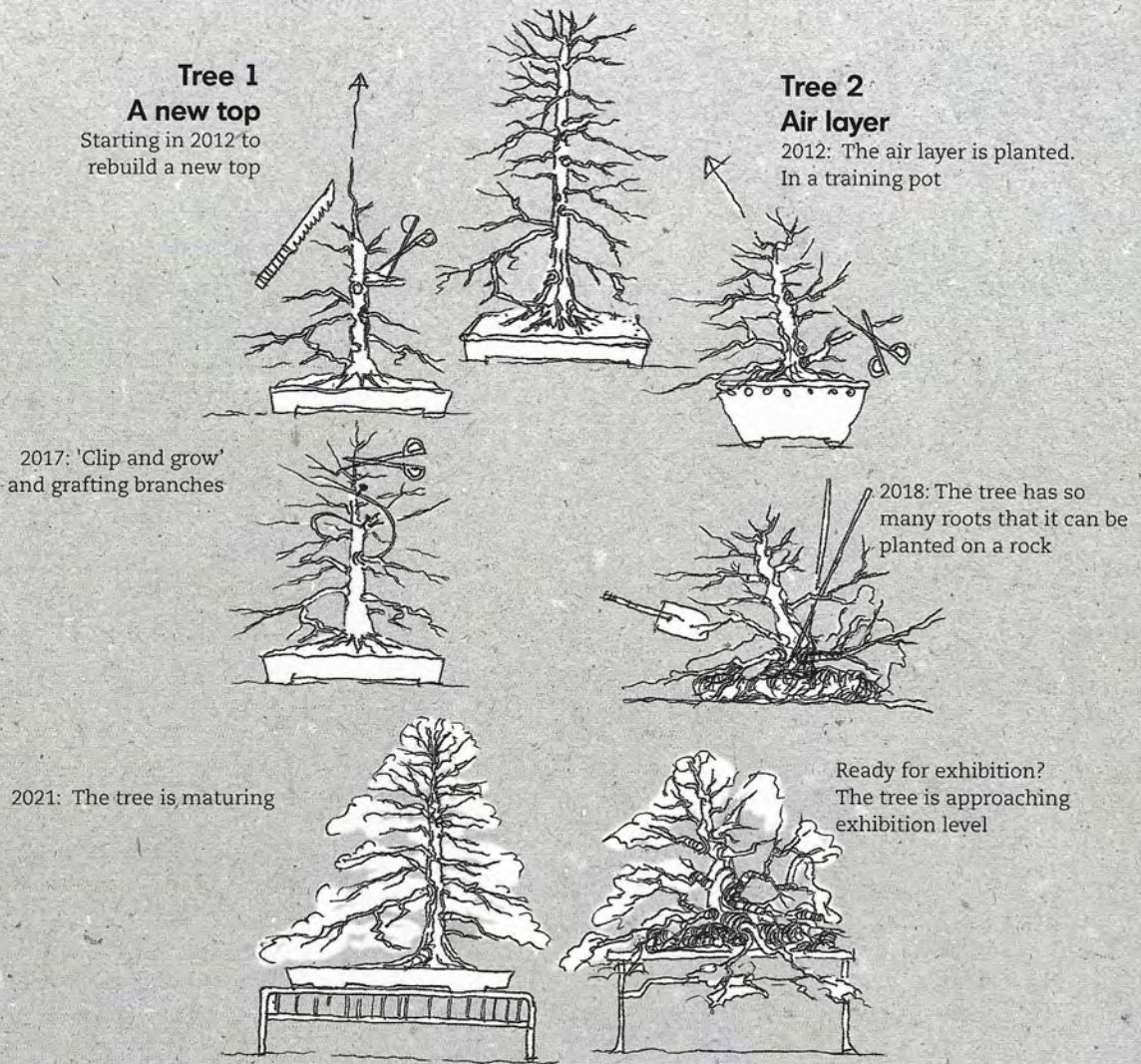
In many ways you can see a fine tree that was growing in Japan — the typical type of *Acer palmatum*, with the good nebari, branches and trunk. But there was one problem — the tapering, or rather the lack of tapering. The trunk was nearly the same size from the bottom to the top. It was late spring 2012 when I started this project. The first and perhaps the most important choice, was to find the best

place to do the air layer, where to make the right taper and the potential to build up a fine branch structure.



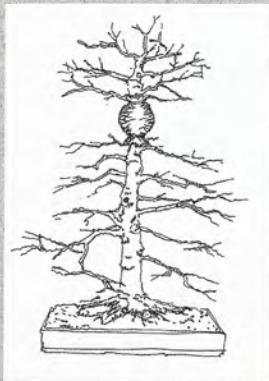
**The process of the maple started in 2012.**

The air layer was done in May and the tree was divided a few months after that at the end of August and early September. Now there are two trees to work with.



**Air layering**

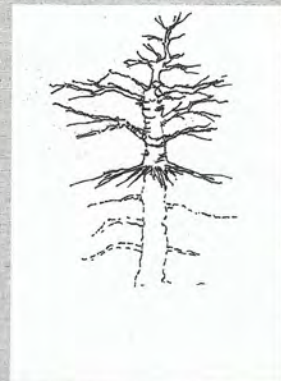
An overview of the main tasks



I made an air layer halfway up the tree



The remaining tree had to develop a whole new top helped by along approach grafts



The air layered top section came off and was made into a new tree



## WORKSHOP

### February 2018: Working on better ramification

Several crucial branches have been established and more branches and shoots are established at the top.



The improved top



Detail of the new top where many branches are grafted back on

### Spring 2020

Several branches have now been established in the top. It is time for working on the details to create a refined branch structure



There are now many branches to work with. Even at the tree's new top



Pruning those branches, which grow too straight, grow in the wrong direction, or in branch pits



Top of the tree. Wounds from the air layering, etc. Many of those branches should be removed, so improving the direction and thicknesses, by simply applying the clip and grow technique. However, there is still a long way to go



The tree December 2020, slowly the branch structure is improving and wounds are starting to heal over



### The near future?

Is the tree approaching an exhibition? Maybe! There will still be a lot of details to work on. But the wounds are healed and the branch structure, crown and volume are in place. I will concentrate on the balance between top and bottom and leaf size.





# Tree 2

## In 2012 I planted it in a pot

The air layer is planted in a training pot. First it initiates a process of developing new roots. It is then repotted every year with a focus on the development of more roots, better branching of the roots and their thickness.



The air layering after the 'bag' has been removed. Gently remove the soil and sphagnum moss



The trunk is sawn through without damaging the roots. The air layer is removed



The top came off. It's an adventure creating a new



The trunk below the roots is cut back



After removal



The tree is planted in an air-containing soil mixture in a training pot. It's then fastened to the pot with wire



It has grown many roots

## Repotting

The tree has grown so many roots that it can be repotted. I took a crucial step on the way to a 'new' tree — the aim was to create a rocky landscape. The rock, a piece of lava is adapted to the size of the root system by adding a net on one side of the rock to make the tree fit. The rock was found on the island of Milos, Greece. I have to decide what side is the front. This is crucial in choosing the branches to preserve and carrying out the work on the overall branch structure.



## GOOD AND WELFARE

No News is Good News

## BBS WEBSITE

Go to [www.bergenbonsai.com](http://www.bergenbonsai.com) & you can view our newsletters, pictures from our latest meetings, the Mid-Atlantic Convention, our extensive library & much more.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

We are on social media Facebook and Twitter, you can see what is going on with Bergen Bonsai and the Bonsai world. Thanks to Will Farro for setting it up. Bergen Bonsai News, if anyone would like to share some bonsai news, please feel free to drop us an email. We will publish it if it is appropriate.

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## LIBRARY

As usual, the complete library inventory is posted on our website ([BergenBonsai.com](http://BergenBonsai.com)). Find what you want, contact our librarians (for videos; hard cover books — Ralf; Bonsai Today/ Focus and Int'l Bonsai, BCL Misc — Peter), and they will bring it to the next meeting. This is a tremendous asset and one of the best ways to learn more about bonsai in general. The library is a treasure trove of information just waiting to answer all of your questions and some that you haven't even thought about yet. Use these winter months to get answers to the questions that you have about your trees in time for the growing season.

## OFFICERS & STAFF

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Treasurer	Ralf Schumann
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Marlene Cuniberti	Len Schwartz
Will Farro	Peter Sobel

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