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MARCH NEWSLETTER 2007

Dear Members,

I am reporting that our first meeting last month was well attended with lots of news to share around and lots of new stones to ponder over. It was a workshop night with most of us attempting to make a daiza with air dried clay. We were all so eager to get our hands dirty and by the end of the night they were being churned out like a proverbial production line. I feel that we need to gain experience in working with this unusual medium and it will take a few times to understand the shrinkage rate of the clay and on how to add bits as the clay dries. Our friend Frank Bryant from the Sunshine Coast Bonsai Society and Suiseki Group has sent some great information and sketches on the experience he has had in making them. I have attached a copy for you to read and hopefully you can try to do some of your own.

On an international note on some of the trends happening overseas. At some of the latest exhibitions there has been a growing trend in water-worn abstract stones that resemble modern sculptures. I think that the presentation of these stones would have to be very plain as heavily carved daizas would go against the smooth and clean lines of an abstract shape.

The other type of stones to be mentioned is that of food-shaped stones. I saw a photo of a large round dining room table and on it were plates with every shape and colour of different foods and all of them were stones. I couldn't believe that they looked so real that I could actually feel my mouth watering. What a great way of attracting attention to our art by displaying a plate of 'delicacies' at a show. For example, in my own collection I have a 'crumbed cutlet' which is the exact shape, size and colour of the real thing. I also have an unopened 'mussel' and even a 'hamburger'. I exhibited the 'burger' at one of our bonsai shows and guess what; it was displayed in a McDonald's wrapper and burger box. Someone came over to me and asked me to remove the left-over as someone had left it behind!!!! I also own a 'chocolate covered ice-cream' --- YUM! It looks so real. George Reissis from Sydney has a stone that resembles a slice of chocolate cake complete with icing that he found on a beach in his homeland of Greece. The patina and colouring is absolutely fabulous. Glenys Bebb in Brisbane has a stone that is an exact copy of a slice of lemon which is placed on a small plate complete with toothpick on her kitchen window sill. When I saw it I thought she was joking when she said it was a stone – the colouring, texture, the patina was all perfect to say the least and again my saliva glands went ballistic.

I feel that we should have fun with suiseki as it cannot be serious all the time. It widens our boundaries when we are out and about searching for that elusive treasure. What a great talking point to attract potential new members at an exhibition when we have something unusual to offer them to view. Have you got something unusual that you would like to share with us, well, drop us a line and tell us all about it.

Happy Hunting,
Brenda

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

'There are only two types of stones – 'Chuck'erites and 'Keep'erites'think about it!!!!!!

GEORGE AND JOHN'S 'TIMELY TIMBER & TOOL TIPS'

Hello 'Rock hounds'

Now that you've found your perfect stone you're wondering how to fashion a suitable daiza to display it. This month we hope to give you some tips on selecting a suitable piece of timber.

Sorting the Wood from the Trees:

Definitions:

Wood: Something that comes from the 'wood' shed to the fireplace or something that may be removed from your ailing bonsai i.e. dead 'wood'.

Timber: Wood that has been milled to dimension, seasoned and can be obtained from a timber yard or other timber suppliers. This is the material that you will need to craft your daizas.

1. Never use timber that is 'green' (unseasoned), your efforts will be wasted when your daiza begins to warp or crack. Some of the imported mass produced daizas have this problem.
2. Try to avoid using timber that has a lot of knots e.g. some of the pines. This type of timber is difficult to work and will give you poor results.
3. Some of the softer timbers like Western Red Cedar or Pacific Maple are good to start out with, you will get a feel for working the timber and it will be easier to achieve a satisfactory result.
4. As your talents improve, try working on some harder, fine grained timber. This will require more effort but the end result can be satisfying, particularly if you're working on an intricate design.
5. Timber can be sourced from many locations including local timber yards, joinery shops (they sometimes have off-cut bins), building sites (ideal for hardwood flooring and decking off-cuts) and local council clean ups for old discarded furniture.

We'll cover more timber tips in later newsletters, happy scrounging.

So long till next time,

G&J

SUISEKI BADGE

If you would like a suiseki badge, it can be yours for just \$7.00 (which includes postage). Post your cheque or money order to the above postal address and don't forget to include your return name and address.

All meetings commence at 7.30p.m. (sharp) at-

The Don Moore Community Centre,
Cnr North Rocks Road and Parnell Street,
NORTH ROCKS. N.S.W.

If you know someone who would like to join Suiseki Australia, you can go to the website www.schoolofbonsai.com and go to the suiseki link and the enrolment form can be downloaded and sent to P.O. Box 4510, North Rocks, N.S.W. 2151. Alternatively, you can contact me at brendap7@bigpond.com or by phone (H) 02 9547 2157 or MOB 0412 384 834.

NEXT MEETING – March 21st (7.30p.m.)

At this meeting we will discuss and show animal shaped stones. I will be showing a new book sent to me by Lindsay and Glenys Bebb that they obtained on a most recent trip to China. In it are a great array of animal shaped stones exhibited in a very natural way e.g. a hen on a nest complete with 'eggs' and so on. Not only will we be bringing along shaped stones but it would be great to see pattern stones also resembling animals.

See you then,

Brenda
