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JUNE NEWSLETTER 2007

Dear Members,

For those of you who did not attend the A.A.B.C. Seminar in Melbourne I thought that I would give you an overview of the suiseki display that we put on in conjunction with the bonsai display.

The response was overwhelming to say the least and we had 26 stones from as far west as Perth and even as far as New Zealand. Seventeen of the stones were of Australian origin and the other 9 came from overseas. All of the stones were beautifully displayed with their own daizas which were then put onto elegant stands that completed the display. The display surely captured the imagination of the bonsai community and of the general public with all of our enrolment forms and information sheets quickly disappearing from the stand. Maybe new members – we hope?

Unfortunately, the display was slightly cramped but who were we to complain as we were given an excellent opportunity to show off our craft with the possibility of gaining more members and experience.

Ideally it would have been good to display the stones like we do in bonsai, one after the other instead we had to interweave them a little and maybe they were not appreciated as much. We were all still very proud of the way everyone came loaded up with their ‘treasures’ and it was great to share experiences and photos of stones that were purchased overseas or collected right in our own backyard, so to speak.

One of our members had a funny experience when flying down from Brisbane he was stopped at the airport and the security were not very impressed with the stone that he was carrying in his hand luggage. They told him that it could be used as a ‘missile’ in the aircraft but he told them that he goes all over the world and brings back stones from all of the conventions and has never been questioned before. It is good to hear though that the security is tight and as for overseas, there are hundreds of suiseki clubs everywhere and maybe the airport staff are used to it.

On the Sunday at lunchtime I organized a group photo of the members who were in Melbourne for the festivities and it was good to put names to faces after all this time of just emailing and phone calls to each other. One of our members kindly put the group photo and pictures of the stones on the Internet Bonsai Club website for your perusal. Also if you go to the School of Bonsai website and click on suiseki you will see the photos of our stone hunt down to the Bombo Quarry at Kiama. We all had a very successful day and the weather could not have been kinder to us. It was just magnificent.

Maybe I have whet your appetite for you to attend future seminars and displays with your stone tucked quite firmly in your hand luggage, anyway we hope we do get to meet all of you at some time or another.

Till next time,
Brenda

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

‘A conference is a gathering of important people who singly can do nothing, but together can decide that nothing can be done.’

- Fred Allen

George and Johns ‘Timely Timber & Tool Tips’

June 2007,

Hello ‘Rock hounds’

Did you happen to attend the AABC conference in Melbourne? For those unable to attend we can tell you that the Suiseki display was very well received and the quality of the Daizas was very good. Those of you making their own Daizas, keep up the good work.

This month we’ll continue with finishing your woodwork and look at some methods of colouring that can be used to bring out the best in your Daizas.

Part Two ‘Applying the Foundation’

1. The first thing you need to decide is Do I need to change the colour? A simple way to get an idea of what the finished colour will be is to apply a small amount of water to the timber. This will show you what the timber will look like after you have applied oil or some clear finishing product. *TIP: don’t use too much water and dry the timber thoroughly before you apply any stain or other coatings* this method also works well to bring out the colour of your collected stones.
2. If the colour needs to be changed you will need to use a wood stain. Some stains available are water based, oil based and spirit based. *TIP: It is easier to darken the timber than it is to lighten it, so try your chosen stain on a piece of scrap off cut before you stain your work.*
3. When using stain, wear gloves and protect the surrounding area from splashes. Spirit stains are very difficult to remove, especially from your hands and fingernails.
4. Another method for changing the colour is to use a varnish stain. This has stain and varnish in the one can. This is a quick way of getting colour and a gloss finish but is difficult to control the final colour.
5. Stain can be applied with a brush or a cloth pad. After the stain has been applied the excess should be removed with a clean cloth to avoid streaking. The amount you apply and the time you leave the stain before wiping off will determine the final colour, the longer the stain is left the darker the end result.
6. Be sure that the stain is completely dry before applying any further finishes. This could be from 4 to 24 hours.
7. Experiment with different stains, water stains come in solid colours and unusual effects can be achieved with these.

Next month we’ll bring you Part Three ‘Putting on the Gloss’

BTW: June is the month for the Sydney Timber & Tool Show. If you are going, look out for Tungsten Burrs for you rotary tools and a cleaning agent called ‘Blade Saver’ this will clean any built up resin or tars from your tool bits (more about this in later newsletters). The show is also a good venue to source dressed or sliced timber for you work.

So long till next time,
G&J

Editor: I agree with the boys about the Sydney Timber and Tool Show. Not only can you pick up lots of ideas and goodies with anything to do with wood but you get all the information on power tools that you do not necessarily get when you go to hardware shops. As long as they make a sale they are not too interested in your particular art or craft to give you advice. You will be surprised what you can buy at very reasonable prices and remember girls it is not only a 'blokey' thing, you should see how many women go to this show. I have been quite a few times and I am still in awe when looking at the many slabs and pieces of incredible coloured and patterned timbers from all over the world. There are demonstrations in carving, wood turning, polishing and finishing timber, cutting and sawing wood with different tools etc. and the smell of the scented timbers like camphor laurel is absolutely magic.

Where and when: June 15-17 at Fox Studios, Moore Park, Sydney.

DATES OF INTEREST

There are a few dates that may be of interest to members who are interested in stones in general and you just never know where and when you may find something of interest. They are lapidary shows and remember that lapidarists always look at what is on the inside of stones where we look at the external shape and colour. We have collected some great things at these shows. It is worth a go! If you are not in Sydney, look up Lapidary Clubs in your local area and visit them – remember they have all this fancy gear to cut and polish – and you never heard it coming from my mouth!!!! You know what I mean. We never **do** c-t and p----h our stones, do we????????

June 8-11 Gosford Show, Gosford Showground, Gosford. NSW
June 16-17 Windsor Show, Windsor Function Centre, Macquarie Street, Windsor. NSW
July 14-15 Queen Street, Campbelltown. NSW
August 4-5 Bankstown Show, Olympic Parade, Bankstown. NSW
August 18-19 Blaxland Show, Blue Mountains. NSW
August 25-26 Cumberland Show, Carlingford. NSW
September 8-9 Bendigo Show, Victoria
September 15-16 Waverley Show, VIC
September 29, 30 | Oct Gemkhana, Mudgee. NSW
October 6-7 Unley Show, Adelaide. S.A.
Nov 3-4 Canberra Show, 'Epic'. ACT
Nov 10-11 Geelong Show. VIC
Nov 24-25 Windsor Show, Macquarie Street, Windsor. NSW

Visit the website www.mineral.org.au/shows/shows.html for further information.

NEXT DAIZA MAKING WORKSHOP

Our next workshop is on the 16th June, 2007 at Ray Nesci's nursery as in previous times. We start at 9a.m. and goes until we want to finish. Bring your own lunch and Ray is kindly putting on the urn for us for our endless cups of tea and coffee. Most importantly bring along the tools you require to make your stands, an extension lead or power board, dust mask and safety glasses are a must and of course a variety of stones and some timber off cuts. Try to choose a softer wood e.g. western red cedar if you are just starting out as this wood is not so hard to work with. Another important item is to bring a non-slip mat, the ones you get from two dollar shops to put on your work area to stop slipping and some clamps if you are tackling a major work. It is important to bring everything you need to tackle your particular project as borrowing is not very welcome in the event of expensive tools. Look at pictures in suiseki books to get ideas on designs for daizas or visit the internet on any suiseki site to get some ideas of what you may like to tackle for your particular stone. See you there!

INVITATION

Now that we have made contact with many new members in Melbourne at the seminar, I would like to invite anyone who is willing to jot down a small article on their joys and woes on collecting stones. They don't necessarily have to be about suiseki as such but anything to do with collecting, woodworking, stone identification, the origin of stones etc. etc. This newsletter is for all members of Suiseki Australia and it would be great if we could all share our ideas with a view of helping us grow and forging into the future into a large and respected organization. Let's do it! Let's here from you!!!

ROCKS, STONES, HAMBURGERS & OTHER ODDITIES

By ALLEN CROPP

In the March newsletter Brenda commented on stones resembling food that had been included in a display and also stated this appeared to be the start of a trend as it was also happening in other countries.

I suppose you would have to call me a traditionalist as far as Suiseki is concerned. The thing that I enjoy most when involved with Suiseki is following Zen concepts and I cannot see myself standing for a relatively long period of time contemplating a food item that is not going to be with us for long before it is consumed. It is like giving "last rights" to a person heading for the electric chair.

If you stood two items (hamburger & quality Suiseki) side by side and spent half an hour just contemplating both items where do you believe your concentration would be for the greater portion of the half hour.

I am not saying that hamburgers can't be displayed but they should be under a totally separate category such as food, animals, objects etc.

Another area which I would like to be sorted out is to use the word "stone" to describe all items. As you all know the literal translation of Suiseki is water stone but we have chosen to call all of our stones Suiseki instead of distinguishing between water shaped stones and stones shaped by wind and sand. To enhance this argument further no Asian country has the word Suiseki included in the title of their organization and it is only Australia and Europe who include Suiseki in their title.

I know that it was me at one of the earlier meetings that suggested the name of Suiseki Australia but at that time we did not have much information to be guided by and if we leave the title as is it may suggest to the Asian countries that we don't understand the basic concepts. Can we change?

Editor: Thank you Allen for a very thought provoking article. Allen is one of our long standing members and has been with us since its inception.

NEXT CLUB MEETING

Our next meeting will be the Wednesday after our daiza workshop day and that will be the 20th June and starting at 7.30 p.m. sharp as a few of us have a long way to travel. Our topic at this meeting will be Pattern Stones, so bring along stones that would coincide with the theme for display. Remember to also bring stones along for our 'kindergarten' section for new stones that we can discuss on how they should be displayed. Remember, anything can be brought along to 'show and tell'. Last month George Reissis showed us some fine examples of fossilized trilobites that he acquired from a lapidary show.

See you all there!