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### MARCH NEWSLETTER 2009

Dear Members,

For those of you that were unable to attend our first meeting for this year, I would like to pass on some information that was given to us by Vince Frizza on using stains and dyes for the timber we use to make our daizas from. Vince is and has been a long time employee of the Wattyl Group, manufacturers of stains, dyes, varnishes and paints.

Not only did we get all the 'goss' on products that are available on the market for every job imaginable but we also got a very interesting history on the use of stains through the ages which was terribly interesting to say the least. I know I love to learn when things first got started in just about anything that I take on. Fascinating!!

Firstly, I will give you a little bit of history of the recorded data on the first use of these products.

- As early as 2600 BC is the earliest written use of dyes in China.
- Wool dyeing was first practiced in Rome about 715 BC.
- In 1775 Bancroft introduced the use of quercitron bark as a natural dye. It yields a yellow and is manufactured from the inner bark of the North American Oak.
- Our very own indigenous people have been using naturally occurring minerals such as ochre to put illustrations on their cave walls and on their hunting implements for at least the last 40,000 years. Many still use these colourful minerals on their bark paintings.

Of course there are many more references made to early history and their discoveries in this area but far too many to mention here.

Vince went on to tell us that there are basically two types of stains – pigment stains and dye stains. Pigment stains are primarily oil-based and are composed of finely ground mineral powders held in some sort of thinner and mixed with resin binders. These are the easiest type of stains to apply and they work better with open-grained woods such as mahogany, ash, oak and walnut.

Then there are the dye stains which are composed of much smaller particles which are dissolved in a solvent. They can be bought either in powder or liquid form to mix your own colours. The solvent

can be alcohol, lacquer, oil or water-based. Dye stains have much better clarity than pigment stains so you can see the patterns in the wood grain more clearly after finishing.

There is an age-old homemade chemical stain produced by soaking nails and steel wool in vinegar that works incredibly well on woods that contain a lot of tannins e.g. oak and mahogany.

I also saw a homemade wood stain especially for pine that was shown on an episode of Better Homes and Gardens last year. The recipe states 1 part turps, 1 part linseed oil, and 2 parts enamel paint. Mix well, brush on and wipe off with a cloth. When dry smooth off with fine sandpaper, apply varnish and polish with oil. When completed the wood grain is still very visible with a slight hint of colour. Of course, any colour enamel paint can be used for your specific purpose.

Basically I am giving you the clearest information that I can as Vince explains that there is just so much to know in putting any treatment on wood and laminates that it certainly is a science in itself. To help you along in putting a finishing touch on a daiza, take a novice's way out and use a stain and varnish all-in-one in Satin finish. They can be purchased in very small cans in different colours and of course the effect will be always different on tight-grained and open-grained timbers. A word of advice is to test these on an off cut first and let it dry. After which a very light sanding with very fine paper and apply a second coat. This will give you the idea of what the finished article will look like. Timber such as Western Red Cedar only needs a couple of coats of Satin varnish as the colour of the wood itself will only be highlighted after using just the varnish. Of course, when in doubt, visit a specialist timber retailer or visit the Working with Show that is on in every capital city usually in about August. Watch the newspapers for when this exhibition is on in your area. It is well worth the visit.

I guess it is with everything we do and try - practice, practice, try, try, try! Your enthusiasm will always shine through however difficult it becomes. I remember when we first started having daiza workshops a few years ago, out of about 10 – 12 people only 2 had knowledge of how to create a stand for our stones. Now, I am very proud to say, we are churning them out and getting very proficient at handling all types of wood and also all types of stones with uncut bottoms on the stones. This is a feat in itself trying to make a stone with an irregular base fit snugly into its stand. After perseverance we are going forward in leaps and bounds.

If you are interested in getting more information on wood finishes, there is a website you can visit and they could supply you with just about everything you will need and with lots of information as well. The site is [www.refinishfurniture.com/cat\\_stain\\_color.htm](http://www.refinishfurniture.com/cat_stain_color.htm) ; take a look at the variety of products which are available.

I hope I have encouraged some interest on you pursuing some interest in making and finishing your own daiza. If you have any 'tricks of the trade' that you would like to share with us, please feel free to share your experience and email me the details and photos if you can to [brendap7@bigpond.com](mailto:brendap7@bigpond.com) .

Happy Hunting,  
Brenda

**THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH**

'The more you reason the less you create.' - Raymond Chandler

Hello 'Rock Hounds'

Welcome to the first Timely Tips for 2009 and apologies for the non appearance in the last newsletter. I wish I could say that it was due to an extended overseas holiday at some exotic location but it was only due to a total computer crash that stopped any written communication with the outside world, funny how we've become so reliant on modern technology.

This month we bring you a new twist on an old idea. Over the Christmas break, George acquired a new router which will make the job of removing timber from the centre of the daiza a lot quicker. One problem that was encountered was how to secure the work while using the router.

After some trial and error, he came up with a novel and practical way to achieve this. By using a standard bench hook with some additional material, you will be able to make a work surface that has excellent gripping properties.

To make the hook you will need;

- \* One piece of flat board / timber approximately 400mm x 300mm and 16 – 20mm thick. The size can be smaller if you wish but probably not much larger. Particle or MDF board is ideal for this job, no need to use a good piece of timber.

- \* Two pieces of timber batten 16 – 20mm square x 300mm long. You can use off cuts of the board material for these.

- \* PVA wood glue and 4 wood screws.

- \* Some acrylic paint

- \* Two pieces of 'Grip Mat' a little larger than the size of the hook.

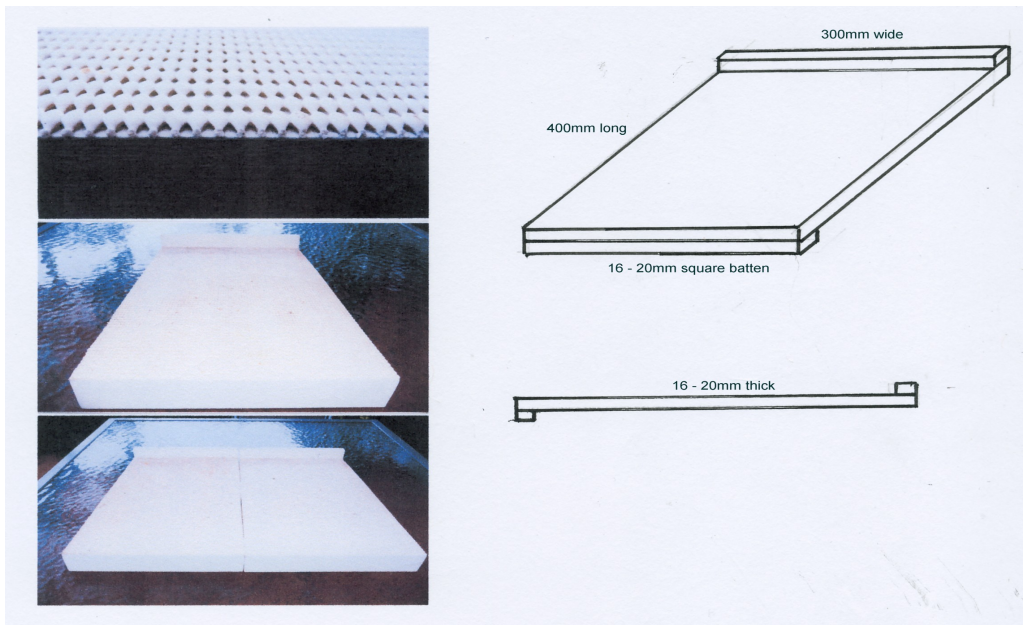
- \* Cut the board to the size that you want, a table saw is ideal but with a little perseverance the job can be done with a hand saw. Cut the two battens to length and glue and screw them to opposite ends of the board, one batten on one side, the other on the reverse side.

- \* Paint the finished job with a coat of acrylic paint and allow to dry. Paint a second coat and while the paint is wet, lay a piece of grip mat on the flat surface of the board making sure there are no ripples or creases. The paint acts as an adhesive and when it is dry you can trim the mat flush with the edge of the board. Don't use too much paint as this will seep through and spoil the gripping surface of the mat. Do both sides of the board, allowing one side to dry before doing the second.

- \* The finished work will give you a non slip surface on both sides, holding the work securely and preventing the hook from slipping or marking the bench or table that you may be working on.

- \* Hint; for larger jobs make two hooks and place them side by side.

Georges Grip Hook (diagrams and photos on the following page)



If anyone is interested we could assemble some of these at a Suiseki workshop.  
 So long till next time,  
 G&J

**PROPOSED DAIZA WORKSHOPS FOR THE COMING YEAR** (Held at Ray Nesci's Nursery,  
 Sagars Road, Dural from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

- March 14<sup>th</sup>
- April 18<sup>th</sup>
- May 9<sup>th</sup>
- June 20<sup>th</sup>
- July 18<sup>th</sup>
- August 8<sup>th</sup>
- September 12<sup>th</sup>
- October 17<sup>th</sup>
- November 14<sup>th</sup>

Any member who happens to be visiting Sydney during these times is very welcome to come and visit us and see us in action. Bring a stone along to show us.

**RECEIVING THE NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL**

I have had some enquiries from a few members about receiving the newsletter in colour so the stones can show their true light. Our members who are already on the email list are very happy as they can then print out the newsletter in full colour. Printing, on the other hand, for the members who receive their newsletters by mail are a bit disappointed that they are only in black and white. Unfortunately, the cost to print in colour is exorbitant to say the least at nearly \$1 for one side only. If there are any members who would like to change and receive their newsletters by email, please drop me a line or an email and I will make the change for you.

**SUNSHINE COAST BONSAI SOCIETY INC.**

**SUISEKI GROUP FIELD TRIP**

**30<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2008**

For once the weather forecasters got it right and Sunday dawned bright and sunny. The early arrivals at Frank's place to car pool, cooled their heels for 30 minutes waiting for Jenny to arrive, but at 10.30 the five present set sail for Kenilworth. (Jenny got the time wrong, arrived late and unfortunately missed out.)

The road to Kenilworth is quite picturesque as it runs through rural countryside. An unscheduled stop was made at a roadside stall to purchase pineapples. A left hand turn at the Showground corner led us down to the riverbank.

Frank had seen a photograph of the spot on the cover of "The Mary Valley Voice" and obtained information on the location by ringing the publisher's office.

It is a pretty good spot. Easy access and vast shoals of STONES. In what seemed like no time at all, we had all gathered, in reality, far too many, as they proved quite heavy as we struggled back to the car. Heavy or not, no one put any back!

All aboard again as we headed for "The Bell Bird Café" for lunch. What a pleasant place this is to wile away an hour or so over hamburgers and such.

But as there was a strong desire by everyone to have an ice cream at the Cheese Factory, we did not linger overly long as we intended to check out "Little Yabba Creek" about 5 kms further on as a possible field trip site.

We had our ice creams and they were scrumptious!!!!

To make the outing a round trip, we took the Obi Obi Road to Mapleton then Nambour and on to Frank's at Eumundi. Over coffee on Frank's veranda, all agreed it had been a great day and that Kenilworth was a great site. Which raised the question?

**WHEN ARE WE GOING AGAIN?**

## **A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A SUISEKI**

I was a lonely Suiseki,  
Just waiting to be found,  
Hoping one day someone would come  
And lift me off the ground.  
My luck was in the other day,  
My heart raced like a rocket,  
As someone came and picked me up  
And put me in their pocket.  
I was taken home in their rucksack,  
And washed until sparkling clean,  
They made me a bed; they called a dai,  
And declared me a mountain scene.  
Now I'm not lonely any more,  
As I look back in reflection,  
I'm with others on a comfy shelf,  
As part of a collection.

**Written following a field trip to the Mary River at Kenilworth,  
By Frank Bryant, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

**DID YOU KNOW?** On our earlier subject of stains and dyes, that for thousands of years, people crushed coloured rocks and mixed the powder with animal fat to make paints.

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS** – Most of our members have sent in their membership renewals for 2009, if you have forgotten or misplaced the renewal notice sent in the last newsletter, could you please list your name on a piece of paper and post together with your cheque or money order for \$15.00 to the address on the front of the newsletter. If you do not wish to remain a member could you please advise us so your name can be taken off of the mailing list. This would really help us a lot, thank you.

### **NEXT MEETING**

This will be on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March at the Don Moore Community Centre at 7.30 p.m. Last month we had a great display of beautifully displayed stones and hopefully we can duplicate that again. If you have something new to show us or tell us, please bring that along also.

See you all then,  
Brenda

P.S. When you have a moment please have a look at these websites at what other people do with rocks – Amazing!!!!

[www.artoflivingrocks.com](http://www.artoflivingrocks.com)

[www.photocontemplations.com/web/ChimneyRock4.htm](http://www.photocontemplations.com/web/ChimneyRock4.htm)

[www.rock-on-rock-on.com/index.html](http://www.rock-on-rock-on.com/index.html)

ENJOY!