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MARCH NEWSLETTER 2010

PLEASE NOTE: Your membership renewals are now due for 2010. Please forward \$15 by cheque/money order to the above address to ensure that you will continue to receive the newsletter.

Dear Members,

It is with great excitement to inform you that our website (www.suisekiaustralia.com) is now proudly showing stones that belong to some of our members. Go to the site and click on the gallery and see for yourself. Now, this is where we want all of our members out there both in the country and interstate to start photographing their own stones and send them to the secretary at suisekiaustralia@yahoo.com to be added to the gallery so we can all enjoy them.

It is not difficult, if I can do it anyone can! All you need is a digital camera, then load the images onto the computer and send them on in an email. In this newsletter, John and George have given some great tips on how to photograph your stones and you don't need any expensive photographic equipment to do it. Read their article following this report.

Your name is not required (for security purposes) but if you have a name for your stone and give the length, breadth and depth in inches (universal measurement) and that would give us all an idea of the size. Maybe you could mention where the stone was found or purchased e.g. China. If your stones do not have a customized daiza, please photograph the stone on a flat black board (jitta) or on a simple bonsai stand. This will make it look more presentable.

Logistically there is a great distance between all our members and this would be a great way of sharing and a feeling of belonging to the club. Go on, give it a try and let's make it a photo gallery to be proud of. If we get a good response maybe we could put the photos on a rotation system so there will always be something new to look at.

Speaking of displaying brings me to the subject of the AABC Bonsai Convention to be held in Sydney in May. As our club, Illawarra Bonsai Society is hosting this event, for which I am also the President; I need to explain a couple of issues in regards to the Suiseki display. Among the suiseki members based in Sydney we have more than enough stones to put on a display. We will have limited space so as a humble request to those other members attending this event from interstate, there would be no reason for you to bring heavy stones and stands on planes and trains etc with you. On the other hand if you would like to send me some nice photos of stones (on the computer) we will put them on a digital

moving photo frame that will be placed on the display table next to the static display. This request is made to ensure that the display will look nicely laid out with the space that we have to work with. I hope that this will be acceptable to our out-of-towners? We are not as fortunate as our neighbours overseas where some displays are for stones only and have all the space they need. Maybe one day!!!!

Enjoy the website gallery and if you have any thoughts about it please contact us if there are any suggestions. It's your gallery.

Happy Photo Snapping!
Brenda

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH

'To display requires staging but the method is never the goal.

Artistry and quality are.

The intent of bonsai and suiseki is one of grace, taste and elegance.' - Susumu Sudo

George and Johns 'Timely Timber & Tool Tips'

March 2010

Hello 'Rock Hounds'

Have you had a look at our Suiseki Australia website recently? You would have seen some familiar (and some not so familiar) suiseki in the gallery section. Thanks to our president, Brenda who has set the ball rolling and who hopes that we as a club will try to keep the site updated with pictures of our suiseki. This leads me to the subject of this month's Timely Tips.

We've all seen those fantastic photos of suiseki and bonsai in magazines and such, and think if only I could produce something like this from my own collection. Generally these photos have been produced in studios by professional photographers using very expensive equipment.

Over the years I've tried taking photos using backdrops of material and plain coloured boards. Some of the results have been ok but the main problem I have is setting everything up, particularly if you only want a couple of shots.

Late last year I was setting up for some shots and thought it would be so simple if I could conveniently store the backdrop out of the way and then just bring it out whenever I needed it. Most of my photos are taken in my workshop or on my rear deck which has clear fibreglass roofing. My thought was to hang something from the roof that could be pulled down to use and then put back up again out of the way. After thinking about this for a while I thought that using a Roller or Holland blind might be the way to go.

I bought a cheap, plain coloured vinyl blind and fixed it to the roof of the workshop. After fixing it and trying it out, I decided to get a couple more blinds of different colours. I've yet to try it but I think that I can probably paint one of these black on order to have more options.



These blinds hang above my workbench so the next job was to find something that I could stand my suiseki or bonsai on ready to photograph. I used a standard storage (milk) crate with a wide board on top that I could drape the blind over. This does away with the crease at the back of the board.



The next step was to set up the subject matter and camera ready to shoot. If I'm only taking a few shots, I'll hold the camera but if a lot of shots are needed, I mount the camera on a tripod.



The photo is ready to use or can be edited with a computer program.



I know that not everyone has a workshop but this method could work just as well by having a blind on a window or mounted on a wall somewhere out of the way. My set up has some natural light from a sky light and also over head fluorescent and incandescent lighting for night use. Hope this gives you some inspiration to get those photos onto the website. That's it for now, see you next time. JC

THIS MONTH'S ROCK FEATURE: **OBSIDIAN**

Obsidian is a glassy looking igneous rock formed when flows of silica-rich lava cooled so quickly that individual mineral crystals do not have time to form and grow. It is commonly black but may be brown or red, and some varieties display a beautiful iridescence in the sunlight. This may appear as a golden or silver sheen or as bands of rainbow colour. This natural volcanic glass was prized by Native American cultures as it could be worked into razor-sharp implements such as spearheads and knives, or highly polished to use as a mirror, or used in other artifacts.

Reference: Geologica, by Dr. Robert R. Coenraads and John I. Koivula

A PAIR OF STONES

Two chunks of gray-green stone,
their shapes grotesque and unsightly,
wholly unfit for practical uses-
ordinary people despise them,
leave them untouched.

Formed in the time of primal chaos,
they took their place at the mouth of Lake Taihu,
ten thousand ages resting by the lakeshore,
in one morning coming into my hands!

Pole-bearers have brought them to my prefectural office
where I wash and scrub away mud and stains.
The hollows are black, deeply scarred in mist,
crevices green with the rich hue of moss.
Aged dragons coiled to form their feet,
old swords stuck in the crown,
I suddenly wonder if they didn't plummet from heaven,
so different from anything in this human realm!

One will do to prop up my lute,
one to be a reservoir for my wine.
The tip of one shoots up several yards,
the other has a hollow, will hold a gallon of liquid!
My five-stringed instrument leaning on the left one,
my single wine cup set on the right,
I'll dip from the hollowed cask and it will never go dry,
though drunkenness long since has toppled me over.

Every person has something he loves,
and things all yearn for a companion.
More and more I fear that gatherings of the young
no longer will welcome a white-haired gentleman.
I turn my head, ask this pair of stones
if they'd consent to keep an old man company.
And though the stones are powerless to speak,
they agree that we three should be friends.

Bai Juyi (Po Chu-i) 772-846

Daiza workshops for 2010 held at Ray Nesci's Bonsai Nursery, Sagars Road, Dural from 9am – 4pm.

20th March
24th April
19th June
24th July
14th August
16th October

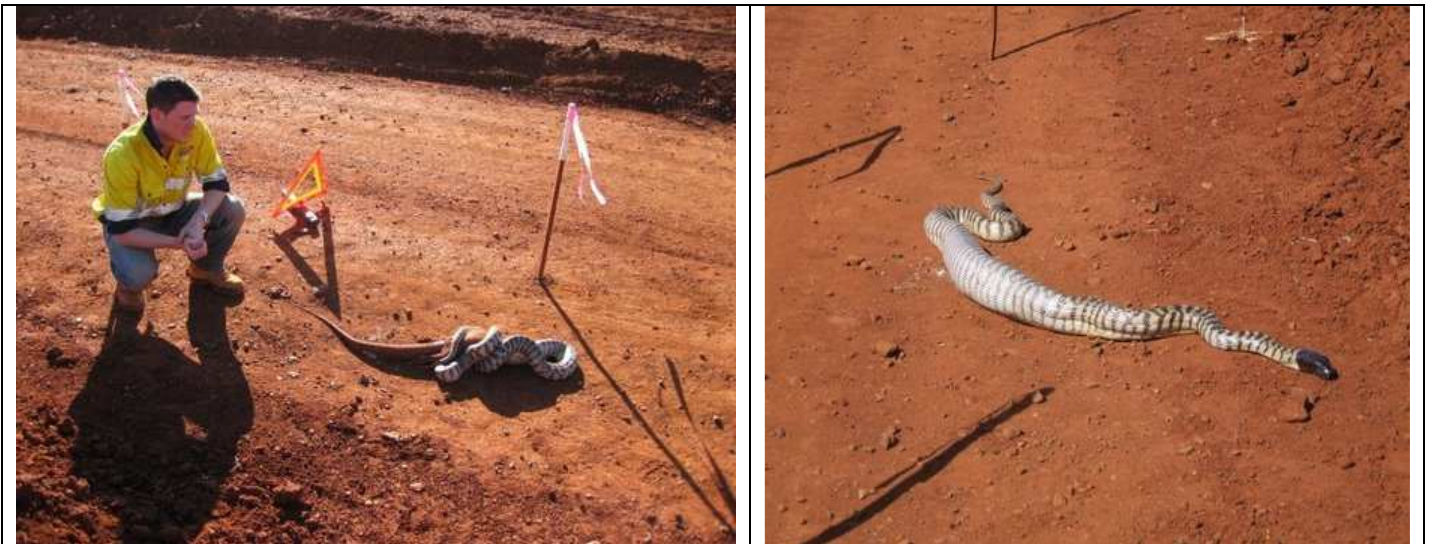
Bring along your stones, timber and tools and also do not forget to bring your lunch. Coffee and tea will be provided.

NEXT MEETING -

Will be on the 17th March at 7.30 pm at the Don Moore Community Centre, North Rocks Road, North Rocks.

Please bring along some good stones to display complete with stands.

Also we may make this night a Hut Stone night, so bring them along to discuss with our members.



GOING, GOING.....GONE!!!!

(Photographed at the Pilbarra Mine Site in Western Australia.)

P.S. I have also attached a great article from Lindsay Bebb as a separate item.
