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## **FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER 2011**

Dear Members,

### **REMINDER NOTICE – MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS NOW DUE**

This reminder is to remind those of you who have not renewed their memberships for 2011. Could you kindly send a cheque/money order for \$15.00 to the above address and include your name and address and that will ensure that you will be on the list to receive future newsletters.

### **HOLIDAY JOTTINGS**

Here we are at the beginning of a new decade and hopefully it will bring to all of us more exciting knowledge and learning about our special art of stone collecting and appreciation.

1. Our Christmas party at the end of last year had a rather unusual twist to it. It went along on the same lines as when we decorate our bonsai trees with a Christmas theme, but for something a bit different I had thought of decorating a stone instead with a 'Chrissy' flavour. As soon as it was mentioned at the meeting before, I could see the cogs of the members' minds turning over and at the eventual last meeting for 2010 I had so much faith in their creativity and they didn't fail me.

We all arrived hiding our surprises like young school children only to show them when they were completed. The imagination that went into the displays took us all by surprise and it bought a lot of laughter and giggles. It was so successful that we agreed that we would continue it again this year.

Go to our website [www.suisekiaustralia.com](http://www.suisekiaustralia.com) then go into the 'gallery' and see the stones that were on display at our Christmas party.

2. At the last meeting for 2010, it was also decided that we would go on a stone hunt in the first week of the New Year as everyone was still going to be on holidays. The destination was going to be Stanwell Park and surrounding areas about 45 minutes south of the city. We, in Sydney, had so much rain during that week and it was touch and go whether it still was going to be on the following Sunday. Sunday morning arrived and it was very overcast, very humid and there was still persistent drizzly rain. We all had to meet at the top of Stanwell Park and by 8.30 a.m. 13 hard and fast members arrived. We all stood on the cliff overlooking the ocean and just watched the thick sea mist edging its way across the beach and up the hills behind the

township. A truly amazing site. Then the rain stopped and that gave us some hope for our intended travels for the day. Stanwell Park is an area where daredevils (or silly idiots) jump off the cliff with their hand-gliders and soar on the air currents.

We then made our way down the hill to a known beach site about 10 minutes away that a member had found previously. Armed with back packs and bags we found our suitable places on the beach and we all found lots of dark, dense and great shaped stones which thrilled us no end.

Lunch time approached and the sun came out with a vengeance and to say that the humidity was that unbearable was an understatement. We found a picnic table and hoed into all the delicious food fare that we had taken along and then we surprised one of our members who had celebrated her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday the day before, with a very sticky and melted chocolate cake complete with a candle.

Our next stop was another beach about 20 minutes away and as soon as we stepped down to it we all found very interesting shaped stones that were also very heavy and dense. What a find this place was until a local came down to us to spoil our day. She asked if we were taking stones away from 'her' beach. Two of our very ingenious members told her that we were art students and we were there only to study and draw the formations and designs on the stones. That appeased her and she was then on her way.

I can tell you, you haven't seen 13 people move so fast carrying what they could just to get out of there just in case she reported us to the authorities.

By this time the heat was so unbearable and the next and best destination for all of us was the local pub for a cold icy drink before heading home.

I will bring you more photos of these stones in future newsletters as soon as daizas are made for them.



Some of the beautiful scenery that we were surrounded by all day.

3. Also at the end of last year all the bonsai clubs in Sydney were approached by the Merrylands RSL Club to put on a combined bonsai and suiseki display to celebrate Australia Day at their club. In fact 8 clubs and Suiseki Australia finally decided that this would be a great way of getting bonsai and suiseki out there to the general public. The club accommodated our every wish and it turned out to be a great success with over 700 people attending the show, demonstrations and customers supporting the 5 vendors who were there. It was truly an outstanding event.

For myself, I was very proud of our display that we put on and all the stones were very well displayed and it wasn't overcrowded. They all had stands together with very miniature soes (accent plants), and this seems to be the trend overseas. Below are some of the stones that were on show. Enjoy!



## **THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH**

‘Nature reveals its wonders only to the one who keeps bonsai and suiseki in his heart.’  
- Old Chinese Proverb

George and Johns ‘Timely Timber & Tool Tips’

February 2011

Hello ‘Rock Hounds’

Seems like it was only a couple of months ago that I was sitting here writing the first tips for 2010, where does the time go? Hope you all had a good break and weren’t affected by personally by the floods, fires, cyclones and famine (what famine I here you ask? The one that’s going to occur when the prices of groceries etc. hit the roof due to the foregoing floods, fires and cyclones).

During the break I decided to have a look around for some more carving bits to extend my tool box. After looking at a few sites to see what’s available, I came across an article which I thought would be of some importance for all those woodworkers out there.

This is particularly relevant for anyone using multi tools or die grinders.

### **Mounting Cutters in Power Tools**

NEVER COMPROMISE ON THE MAINTENANCE AND SAFETY OF POWER TOOLS!! It goes without saying, although it needs to be said, that using a poorly maintained, worn out or damaged power tool is, at best, a false economy and just might cost you a great deal of pain or money.

The cutters required to carve wood and bonsai trees efficiently, need to be of very high quality.

Anything that will cut wood quickly will cut flesh like thin air. Most cutters used for carving work in bonsai and woodwork require very high speeds to work properly. High speeds are 10,000 rpm (revolutions per minute) or above. Cutters designed to run at this speed are very special and will not do a good job, or last long, if run at 3,000 rpm in your average electric drill. (*This also applies to high speed router bits*). In actual fact most cutters run best at 15-25,000 rpm. These speeds are easily attained by die grinders and hobby tools like Dremel etc. The reason for such high speeds is very simple, the faster the cutting teeth pass the wood the more chips will be removed and the easier the work will progress. Also at such speeds the cutting edge hits the wood surface so fast and so often the cutting action is very smooth and very little inertia is passed into the work piece, that’s really important with bonsai! Slow speeds of rotation mean the cutting teeth slam into the work, trying to bite heavy chunks of wood. This means that the cutter becomes blunt much faster and possible damage, i.e. bending of the shaft could occur. This also passes a lot of energy into the work piece, if the work piece is a bonsai tree the result will be a lot of root damage.

So, the efficient performance of power carving tools relies upon high rpm. Unfortunately high rpm brings with it some inherent problems. For instance centrifugal forces that attempt to pull an object travelling in a fixed rotational path away from the centre of rotation. As the rotational speed of a tool increases centrifugal force acts to throw its mass outwards. (*Example of this is a car wheel out of balance, the faster it rotates, the more vibration there is*). Once this force exceeds the tensile strength of the tools weakest part the tool will deform. In practice this usually means the cutter’s shaft will bend.

In order for a rotary cutter to work efficiently it must spin accurately around its axis, resisting deformation by centrifugal force. Doing so means that each cutting tooth will strike the surface of the work equally. This means the cutter works ‘smoothly’ and the cut face is neat and clean, the cutter will last a long time and the power tool will not be put under undue stress.

Of course it's not possible to create a tool that has perfectly balanced mass when spinning around its axis and this is where our problems really begin. As a tool rotates its effective mass increases with speed, it gets heavier. Any imbalance in the tool is magnified and any deflection in the tool's axis is magnified. (*Weights are added to a car wheel to overcome this imbalance, but obviously this wouldn't work on your cutter*). Once this reaches a critical point, the shaft will bend. Cutters that do not rotate evenly create much higher sideways forces and so are more likely to become deformed. No matter how good the quality of your power tool its output shaft will have a small degree of 'run out'. That is, the degree of tolerance from a perfectly true rotating axis. The further you get from the tool's bearings the larger the run out. That's why it's not possible to make very long high speed cutting bits. Because of the relatively large run out at their end they would bend very quickly.

### **Some points to be aware of when using power cutters.**

- \* Never use a machine with worn or noisy bearings or a worn casing or worn motor bearings.
- \* Never use a worn collet, retaining nut or output shaft.
- \* Always use the correct size collet for your cutter. This is particularly relevant where larger shaft tools are concerned and is the main source of tool failures. Remember a 1/4" is not 6mm (it's 6.35mm). A quarter inch shaft cannot be safely mounted in a 6mm collet. A 6mm shaft can be inserted into a 1/4" collet but the run out will be excessive.
- \* Only ever mount high speed cutters using collets NEVER EVER mount them in a 3 jaw chuck (fitted to some Dremels) The clamping force of a chuck is not sufficient to hold high speed tools in place and they are also very inaccurate and will cause excessive run out.
- \* Always tighten the securing nut fully. If the securing nut is not pulled up sufficiently the tool may rotate in the collet.
- \* Never use distorted tools, e.g. bent cutter shaft. These will generate excessive side forces on the machine's bearings that will wear out much more quickly.
- \* Never use blunt or dirty tools. These will require extra force to get them to cut. This will lead to excessive machine wear. It will also generate heat that may affect the wear resistance of the cutting teeth and damage the work piece.
- \* Always keep cutting tools clean and free of resin build up.
- \* Regularly remove collets, clean them and their mounting sockets with a brass brush.
- \* Always store cutters / bits carefully to avoid damage. If they're rolling around loosely in your tool box they can be chipped against each other.
- \* If the tool your using starts to vibrate or make unusual noise, **turn it off immediately** and check that the cutter is not loose or bent. The last thing you want is a sharp high speed cutter flying around your work area. You need this like a hole in the head!!!!!!

The above information is an adaptation of an article published by Kaizen Bonsai Ltd.

That's it for this month, so long till next time,  
G&J

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*This following article was in Sydney's Sunday Telegraph on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2011.*

*Quote:*

"Want to strike it rich? Try your luck by joining those who will head in droves this autumn to Glen Innes in the New England Tablelands of northern New South Wales to fossick for sapphires and a treasure chest of other gems.

The lure is the three-day Minerama Fossicking and Gem Show, biggest of its kind in NSW, on March 11-13, which draws rock hounds, gemologists, fossickers, families and adventurers from across Australia.

Fossicking's fun – Minerama's field trips attracted more than 450 fossickers in 2010. A family activity, it's simple and no licence is needed.

The show part of Minerama attracts more than 70 commercial traders from a wide area who display and sell their glittering wares, from \$2 "specials" to fine investment gems, in the Glen Innes Services Club. Entry to the show is free and there are gem-cutting demonstrations and free advice from gemologists.

The town, at the intersection of New England and Gwydir highways, is about 4 hours' drive from Brisbane, and seven from Sydney."

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*One of our members from Victoria sent us this article and photos that I think you will find very interesting and unique:*

Several months ago the Bairnsdale Bonsai Group went for a bus trip to the Buchan Caves, which is in the mountains north of Lakes Entrance and Bairnsdale.

We had a picnic lunch at The Cave's Picnic Area, and then went on to Buchan South to visit Stonehenge Farmstay Camping Ground and Museum. This lovely little valley and park area was founded by Mick and Gwen Buttorworth as the first Rockhound Caravan Park in the world. The park is actually only 6 acres and is part of a 320 acre working farm. The original owners have since passed on.

The Museum itself is fascinating, full of rock collected from all around the world. I think there are pieces there that are no longer attainable. They are selling some pieces, hence the piece of Obsidian. The other two photos are of the one piece of Petrified Wood from Chinchilla, Queensland. When we travel over Mount Hotham to go to visit friends in Shepparton, I like to visit a little shop called 'The Rockery' in Longwood, Vic. Both aspects of the rock intrigued me, so I couldn't leave it behind.

The big frustration in all this is my lack of geological knowledge, but it is still fun to look and collect.

Juliet Miskin



**OUR NEXT MEETING**

The first meeting for this year will be held on the 16<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30p.m. sharp at the Don Moore Community Centre, North Rocks Road, North Rocks.

Please bring along some of the stones you found on the stone hunt that we all didn't get to see on the day, and especially to show the few members who couldn't be there with us.

Could you also bring along the completed DAS air dried clay daizas that we made last year. Remember to sand, stain and varnish them to show them off. We will publish photos in a later newsletter.

Show and Tell items are always interesting to the group so bring along anything new and different.

At this meeting we will also organize this year's meeting dates and daiza workshops which will be published in next month's newsletter.

Let's start off the New Year with some great encouragement to all.

See you all then,  
Brenda

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The following photo was sent to me by the Californian Suiseki Association and it is such a great stone that I just had to include it.



A challenge is thrown out to you, our members, give this gentleman a name and you could be in the winning for a great prize!

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Also included in this bumper issue is an article by Lindsay Bebb on his recent trip to China. This is a follow on from Georgina Kretschmar's article at the end of last year.

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