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MAY NEWSLETTER 2011

Dear Members,

I think we have come so far in the last 5 years, especially in producing carved wooden daizas for our stones and also in the proper displaying of them.

The only regret that I have is that our members here in Sydney are unable to help with the woodworking for our other members around Australia. For those people I hope that we can publish enough information for you to keep up with what we are doing and my only advice is to have a go.

I had a fantastic opportunity to go to Taree recently to give them a talk on suiseki at their annual bonsai show. Their members have a very strong following of suiseki within their bonsai club and the improvement in the carving of the stands was phenomenal since the last workshop we helped them with last year. I only wish that other members elsewhere were more accessible to the guidance and tuition of our very competent guys, George and John, who are masters of working with wood. We have learnt so much from both of them about different types of wood and how to treat them in the final stages of completion. If it wasn't for them we would still be floundering in the shallows.

We still come across those who say they are not very artistic but I have to say, quite confidently, that with perseverance, patience and dedication you too can become very competent, like we all did in the beginning. Do you have the dedication to strive for more? - Of course you do, especially if you say you have the love for collecting and displaying stones. In time you can be very adept to working with wood. If all of the girls within the club have mastered making these stands, you can too.

As an alternative to wood, recently we have been experimenting and working with DAS, air-dried clay that after finishing looks very similar to wood. It can be sanded, stained and varnished in exactly the same way so maybe for starters you could experiment and see how you go. Very easy, wrap the stone in Glad Wrap (one layer) and put a rubber band gathered up at the top of the stone. Then with a small rolling pin, flatten out a small piece of clay on a flat board. Now with a flat knife draw up the sides around the stone and finish and smooth off the sides to the desired height like you would do when icing a cake. **IMPORTANT** – leave the stone (plastic covered) in the completed 'daiza' until it completely dries so it stops any shrinkage. This can take a while and it all depends on the type of weather. If you wanted to you could add some feet to the underneath of the 'daiza' by shaping some of the clay and letting them completely dry and then they can be glued on with something like Aquadhere and finish off as follows. When completely dry remove the stone, sand, stain and varnish as you would if it were made of wood. This clay is surprisingly strong and at least by experimenting you can

finally display your favorite stones at your next bonsai show. In this way your 'treasure' may instill some interest to the non-believers and evoke more enthusiasm here in Australia.

NOTE: Das can be purchased from Hobby Stores and comes in two colours – off white and a terracotta colour. The latter is the most preferred as it is so close to a timber colour.

Get ideas for designs from books, the Internet, attending other displays and at club interactions. Like anything we put our hands and minds to will take time and there is no one that I know that can wave that special wand to instill that instant artistic flair into any of us. It is up to you to further your knowledge with what you have available. If you need any advice you can always email me at brendap7@bigpond.com or get me on my mobile 0412 384 834 and I will be only too willing to give you some advice.

In closing, I would like to encourage everyone to be patient and to be dedicated to this great art and one day you will say to yourself, "I feel I have now arrived at the artistic stage of my suiseki life!"

Happy Creating,
Brenda

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

'- an artist is not a special sort of man;
each man is a special sort of artist'.

- Mr. Saburo Kato

George and John's 'Timely Timber & Tool Tips'

Hello 'Rockhounds'

As a follow on from last month's TTTT's, we'll carry on with some more info on timber and daiza crafting.

Now that you have a suitable piece of timber the next steps are;

1. If possible, select a piece of timber that will complement the colour of your stone. This will save staining the piece and the end result will be more natural.
2. When placing your stone on the timber, have the front (viewing aspect) of the stone aligned with the edge of the timber (along the grain). The daiza will look much better if the end grain is not visible.
3. After you have carved/shaped the daiza and the stone is ready to be mounted, you will need to sand the surface as smooth as possible; this can be done in a number of ways.
 - Hand Sanding. Use sand paper on a block for flat surfaces and rolled into a tube wrapped around a pencil if you need to sand curves. Start with coarse grit to remove timber quickly and then use finer grits to get a smooth finish. Non-clog sandpapers such as Adalux or Drilube are recommended. These are a little more expensive but give a much better result. Paper comes in sheets or rolls that can be bought by the metre. Grades to use are 80 (coarse) to 280 (fairly fine). **TIP:** If you need very fine paper, try rubbing 2 pieces together.
 - Power Sanding. Rotary tools have a huge range of bits that can be used for detailing. Drum and flap sanders are the obvious choice but many of the shaped stone grinding/polishing tips can be used. Experiment with these on some off cuts of timber so that you can get to know which bits will give you the desired finish.

- Finishing. Final finishing can be done using very fine steel wool. This has the advantage of moulding itself to the shape of your daiza. Steel wool is available from woodworking shops and some hardware stores. Grades range from 'O' (fine) to 'OOOO' (very fine). Don't use kitchen type scourers as these are too coarse and mark the timber.
- Other finishing tools. Small files and diamond rasps which are available in various profiles.

We are off to Western Australia for a bit of a look around and hopefully find some interesting stones to bring home for our collection. We'll be looking for smooth black stones in particular, but if we happen to come across any gold coloured ones in the Kalgoorlie region, we won't say no!!

So long till next time,
G&J

To keep in with the Western Australian theme from George and John, I received this article from one of our members that makes for interesting reading. This, I thought, could be our rock article for this month.

GASPEITE

GASPEITE – Hardness 4.5-5;
Locality: Carr Boyd Mine, Western Australia

Gaspeite crystallizes in the rhombohedral system and primarily in massive formation. The colour is a rich limey Green. The mineral was named after the Gaspé Peninsula where it was first discovered. In Australia, the mineral is also known as "Alura". This mineral is said to bring spirituality in everyday living, bringing the enchantment and attraction of sanctity to the user. It assists one in removing the curtain between the distress of ignorance and a very clear view of assurance.

It is also used by the Aboriginal Tribes to gain visions and to provide success to endeavours. It has been used by this culture in diagnostic healing, in raising the consciousness toward the enlightened state and in communicating with the spirits and with those from other worlds. It is thought to bring healing powers to the user and to provide protection from all the dangers occurring on the physical plane. The energy has brought about the awakening from the "dream of illusion" and to promote the experience of the self as part of the universal spirit.

It can be used to attract people toward one for friendship or business, such that the manifested attraction is "for the good of all". Sometimes, those wearing Gaspeite grow absorbed with the enormity of successes of mundane nature such that there is little time for the sacred; hence, a "break" is often necessary to ensure continuation "on the path". Use of the "Super Seven" with Gaspeite ameliorates the necessity for the "break".

Gaspeite also enhances impartiality, yet resolution, and allows one to endure individually when conditions demand. It also assists one in understanding that it is "okay to ask for, and to accept, help from others; it contributes to the insight of reality that assistance from another is, in truth, help from the self".

It has been used in the treatment of disorders of the lungs and to ameliorate the expansion of mucous glands in the bronchial walls. It can also be used to further the application of oxygen affecting the stimulation of the senses, speech, behavior, thought patterns and memory.

*This article originated from 'Love is in the Earth – a Kaleidoscope of Crystals', by Melody
Published by Earth-Love Publishing House Copyright 1995.*



Two beautiful examples of the type of jewellery made with Gaspeite.

On further research-

Gaspeite is an extremely rare nickel carbonate mineral named for the place it was first discovered in the Gaspé Peninsula, Quebec, Canada. During the course of a nickel mining operation, the Gaspeite was unearthed.

It is a bright green mineral. Gaspeite is formed in the regolith (a layer of loose rock material) as a supergene alteration mineral of nickel sulfide minerals, generally in arid or semi-arid environments which produce conditions amenable to concentration of calcareous or carbonite minerals in the weathering profile.

This mineral is mined from a handful of locations worldwide. Aside from its type locality in Canada, it can be found in the nickel ore deposits in Kambalda and nearby Widgiemooltha both south of Kalgoorlie, Western Australia.

Gaspeite is a green mineral and may contain brownish patches which may give it a distinctive character.

The stone is used mainly as a cabochon in sterling silver jewellery and for specimen stones. The best material of late is coming from the places mentioned previously near Kalgoorlie.

GREAT STONE COLLECTION

By Roger Hinrichsen

I was recently fortunate enough to purchase a private collection of suiseki and bonsai. The suiseki are all from Korea, but the bonsai were grown in Australia.

The Korean gentleman I purchased the collection from is 70+ years old, and an exceptionally imposing and nice man.

He came to Australia some 20 years ago, but still doesn't speak any English, so all negotiations were via his daughter-in-law.

His collection is over 40 years of searching and was also recorded photographically each time he went on suiseki safaris; river beds and shorelines with millions of water stones reminded me of Nerriga some 30 years ago. The stones were collected from areas surrounding Choongju City in South Korea, where he resided, and all the stones are water stones with the exception of one 'overhanging' stone collected from the sea. This stone is the best overhanging stone I have ever seen in or out of any suiseki book I have read or purchased.

There are over 50 stones in the collection. The largest in the collection which weighs 30kg is a magnificent black water stone that comes with two daizas. One for displaying the stone horizontally and one vertically – an amazing stone.

Another item is equally the best I have seen – a lake stone – which is grey/black in an antique bronze suiban. The stone is displayed in white/tan coarse sand and this stone was also collected in Korea and is an antique with metal ring handles on either end.

The daizas made for the two Hut Stones in the collection are wonderfully unique.

Another unique shaped stone is displayed in the same white/tan sand in a rectangular deep suiban apparently used in Korea during spiritual and ceremonies related to suiseki. This suiban is also bronze.

The gentleman (I will refer to as Mr. L) also received trophies for his collection at annual Korean exhibition displays.

Mr. L. kindly donated a carved suiseki stand and 4 books he had collected-

Book 1 - The 1980 Japanese International Bonsai and Suiseki Exhibition.

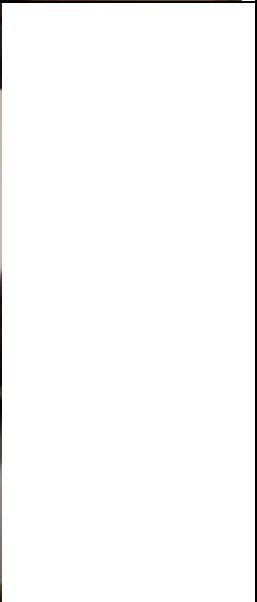
Book 2 - The 1984 Korean Annual Suiseki Display

Book 3 - The 1987 “ “ “ “

Book 4 - (No date). Very large Korean Annual of Bonsai and Suiseki Displays. (The suiseki displayed in this book are just amazing).

The 15 bonsais in Mr. L's collection range from small to large – 80% of them are pictures of perfection and detail.

P.S. I had the great fortune to visit Roger and photograph this amazing collection and I have included some of the photos. - Ed



This is the large 30kg stone that has two daizas – one to display horizontally and the other vertically.



SOFALA -- NSW. (Sergio Banach)

“A stone collecting trip or a trip back in time...” Some 250 km West of Sydney, just half an hour drive out of Bathurst on the banks of the Turon River lays the beautiful picturesque town of Sofala. Known more for its gold rush days of the 1850’s and 60’s, it’s hard to believe this town was once home to 10,000 people. Now it is only 3 streets with a population of around 200, a school, pub, general store, a couple of gift/coffee shops and many derelict

buildings as a reminder of the by-gone era. As for accommodation, this is very limited with a Farm stay, Bed and Breakfast or the Pub. We stayed at the pub (room sleeps 3)- however be prepared to be kept awake until midnight on a Saturday night as it is a gathering place for locals and they are there till shutdown. Although it is cheap and comfortable accommodation, the rooms have beds only and there are no power points or tea/coffee making facilities available. They have a shared bathroom/shower at the end of the hallway. (I would recommend staying in Bathurst and driving in for the day).

As for stone collecting, it is a great place with the river easily accessible everywhere. The river bed has banks of stones, stones, and more stones. The vast variety of styles, shapes, sizes and colours is endless. One of the major types of stones found in the area is quartz. There are many stones with quartz veins and chunks stuck to them making some interesting pictures, designs and textures with contrasting coloured backgrounds.

This time for me was not a stone collecting trip but more of a family sightseeing and gold panning with the kids...(lets say "I still have to work for a living" as we didn't strike any riches); However I did manage to sneak away one early morning and collected a variety of interesting treasures. It is definitely a place I will be returning to with a lot more fossicking time.

As for other activities in the area, the sightseeing and history at Hill End (only 40 minutes drive from Sofala) is something not to be missed, you can try your luck gold panning, the Sofala cemetery is an interesting place to visit and for the fisherman, the Turon River has the occasional nice trout. Locals tell me that in the hotter summer months care should be taken as snakes are commonly seen.

Sofala... A Beautiful little town long past its gold rush days but still full of treasures for us to enrich our hobby of Suiseki.





DAIZA WORKSHOP - This Saturday the 14th May at Ray Nesci's Nursery. Bring all necessary equipment and your lunch. Starting at 9am.

NEXT MEETING – Will be on Wednesday the 18th May starting at 7.30pm sharp. Please bring along any new stones for show and tell and some display stones. See you all then.
