



YAMA KI NEWSLETTER

Learning from each other Sharing with the community”

November

2002

MARTY SCHMALENBERG LECTURE/DEMONSTRATION SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9TH 1:00 PM @ BARTLETT ARBORETUM

Mr. Marty Schmalenberg will make his second appearance at YAMA KI on Saturday, November 9, at 1:00 pm, in the Education Building at the Bartlett Arboretum. Professionally he is a teacher of Japanese and Chinese culture, religion, and history. He adds an educator's skills to his depth of bonsai knowledge. *Marty* has studied in Japan under several masters including *Mr. Mikio Oshima*, *Mr. Toshio Kawamoto*, and *Mr. Hiroyoshi Yamaji*. *Marty* has traveled extensively in Japan, South Korea, China, and Taiwan. He has displayed bonsai at the International Bonsai and Suisek Exhibition in Osaka, Japan, at International Bonsai Symposia, and at MidAtlantic Bonsai Societies Festivals. For more than 25 years *Marty* has been an active participant in bonsai. This participation includes presenting lecture/demonstrations around the country and writing for several bonsai publications. Perhaps this year he will tell us in which mountains he does his collecting. He will use a collected pine for his lecture/demonstration with YAMA KI.

YAMA KI AT THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

Whew! Sixteen days plus setup time. This year YAMA KI's Exhibit at the New York Botanical Garden was on display for a little more than two weeks—three weekends. It was the longest running show we have had in our almost 30-year history.

NYBG has outdoor sculpture from the Museum of Modern Art in Manhattan in the courtyards outside the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory. Many people who came to see the sculpture re-entered the Conservatory near our exhibit, others went to the sculpture passing through our exhibit from the main entry. One of our entry points was very near the restrooms and that also helped our traffic flow. In any event, we had many visitors. People came: with tours, as families, in small groups, in couples, solo, as lunching ladies or golfing guys, grade school students chaperoned by teachers and parents, high school students from biology or art classes, at least a dozen NYBG employees stopped by on their lunch breaks.

Visitors frequently wanted to know why their bonsai had died so soon after purchasing it. Others had success with their trees but wanted to go further in styling or adding other species to their collection and sought advice related to where they lived. Some just “Ooohd and Aaaahd.”

Strollers saw 23 standard size bonsai along with many shohin and accent plants. They looked at forests, and trees representing most of bonsai's styles including root-over-rock, formal and informal upright, cascade; material of varied species including flowering and evergreen; hardy and tropical; collected, seed-grown, and nursery bred; young material and pine almost 250 years old.

The trees and plants came from member collections. The contributors were *Berni Gastrich*, *Helen Hasselriis*, *Maggi Limburg*, *Lucille Miller*, *Mike Pollack*, *Gail Therrien*, *Arlene Trebach*, and *Phyllis Wishnick*.

Several people signed up as new YAMA KI members during the exhibit and two of them, *Steven Peach* and *Robert Tirado* joined the long-term members who served as docents and waterers. These stalwarts were *Selma Bernstein*, *David Cowles*, *Leonard Douglas*, *Berni Gastrich*, *Faye and Ben Gold*, *Melba Grieshaber*, *Adam Hume*, *Mike Ivany*, *Irving and Rhoda Kleiman*, *Lucille Miller*, *Mike Pollack*, *Gail Therrien*, *Arlene Trebach*, and *Phyllis Wishnick*.

As always, the staff of the NYBG was helpful, thoughtful, and very interested in our exhibit. *Lucille Miller* and *Berni Gastrich*, our co-chairs did an outstanding and exhausting job. Without their patience, follow-through, people and aesthetic skills we would not have an exhibit of this quality nor in such a prestigious setting.

All of YAMA KI extend their thanks and appreciation to *Lucille* and *Berni*.

LACK OF MEMBER PARTICIPATION A PROBLEM AT THE YAMA KI BONSAI EXHIBIT

Berni Gastrich

The annual show at the New York Botanic Garden is now history. The same few people have again done the work. Only two or three new people provided trees for the show. *Lucille Miller* had to make dozens of calls to get members to volunteer as docents. The majority of our members did not even come to see the show.

Fortunately the public loved it. Even the guards who see beautiful plants daily were excited enough to bring their families. It is a well established fact that a club thrives only through the activity of its members. The benefits of membership can be immeasurable. Membership dues alone do not insure successful continuity for the society nor a maximum effective learning and social experience for members. Member participation is essential!

SAMPLES OF MY FAVORITE BONSAI AT THE NYBG EXHIBIT EACH YEAR

Editor



Pinus parviflora



Juniperus sargentii



Chamaecyparis forest

BACK TO BASICS BY BERNI

Berni Gastrich

How do I know when to put them away for winter? All tropicals are, of course, indoors by now. We are discussing only those species native to the North Temperate Zone, the so-called hardy bonsai. Typical dates in our area are approximately November 15th to December 1st. The calendar is not the best guide however. Have you noticed how extremely late the autumn foliage color is this year? This is a much better guide. When the leaves color, the tree is sending its energy (sugars) down into its roots for winter storage. When this is COMPLETE the leaves are no longer useful to the tree and fall off. The tree is now dormant. Put your trees away when the native trees in your area have lost at least half of their leaves. This is usually after a few SIGNIFICANT frosts. If you put them away too early they may never achieve true dormancy and will die next year.

Put Beeches and Chinese elms away at the same time even though they may hold their leaves all winter. Evergreens achieve a somewhat different kind of dormancy but can safely be put away at the same time. Dormancy is very much like hibernation in animals. Life does continue but at an extremely reduced rate.

Some watering is still needed, more for evergreens than for deciduous. How much? Scratch down into the soil. If it is dry in the top 20% of the depth of your pot, water.

THE FIRST STONE APPRECIATION SYMPOSIUM IN THE U.S.

Ina Schwartz (guest reporter)

A few years ago six men, each described by their loving family and friends as having “rocks in his head”, met at a restaurant. They wanted to organize a Stone Appreciation Symposium in the United States. They knew of S.A.S. conventions in other places around the world, but weren’t sure if anyone would come to such a meeting in this country. On a (by now) famous napkin, which should have been saved for posterity, they pooled their ideas, plans, hopes, and money on a gamble. The very first U.S.A. International Stone Appreciation Symposium was born and held this October in Harrisburg, PA, and 165 participants came from many countries of the world.



What a delight it was for everyone to meet others just like themselves - people who have been searching for and collecting stones because of an affinity many couldn’t explain in words. In addition to the tactile, permanent quality of the stone, there was agreement that the near and distant views of mountains, waterfalls, glaciers, and pools could make memory come alive again. Each stone, set in a form - sculpted wooden daiza or in a suiban selected for display. The miniature world set upon it, became an object of the imagination and a beautiful metaphor for the wholeness of nature. It was not “just a rock” at all.

The packed two days of 20 lectures and slide shows, also included two judged exhibits (professional and show participant), four stone critiques (who knew you could critique a stone?), raffles, a wonderful sales area, a banquet, and plenty of social time.

Kudos went to the originators of the Symposium: *Jim Doyle, Glenn Reuch, Martin Schmalenberg, Arthur Skolnik, Sean Smith, and Bill Valavanis*, and to their guest lecturers flown in from Japan and Switzerland, and our own home-grown exhibitors, collectors and lecturers

The best was saved for last. At the final banquet, we were told to expect the next International Stone Appreciation Symposium to be held the first weekend in October, 2004, possibly again in Harrisburg. When word of this past one gets around, register fast. We might have to rent Madison Square Garden to hold everyone who wants to come!

NOTES FROM THE STONE APPRECIATION SYMPOSIUM

Mike Pollack

Some tips on formal suiseki display from Mr. *Arishige Matsuura*, President of the Nippon Suiseki Association:

Suitable sand is difficult to get, even in Japan (good sand to fill a medium size suiban can cost up to \$300).

1. Once the right sand is found, it must be washed many times until water passing through it runs clean.
2. For display, fill suiban with dry sand, then add water. Shake the suiban over a basin, then drain most of the water out by tipping the suiban gently. The sand becomes firm and well-set in the suiban.

3. Position the stone in the sand and smooth the sand around the stone with a gentle spray of water or a small trowel.
4. When this is done, lightly spray the stone again and the display is ready.
5. The evaporating water will create different “scenes” as the stone dries. This is the best part of the suiseki display.
6. “Trained” stones, those that have been allowed to develop a surface patina through years of exposure to the elements, dry out less quickly. This longer drying time helps to elicit the interesting patterns that are so prized in an excellent suiseki display. This aging of stones is called Yo Seki.



The stone Martin Pauli is holding was purchased by Mike Pollack from Mr. Matsuura

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COMING EVENTS

- Nov. 9 *Marty Schmalenberg* Lecture/Demonstration
 Dec. 14 Annual Holiday Party & Auction
 Jan. 11 TBA