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'Suiseki Australia'**

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OUR NEXT WORKSHOP WILL BE ON THE 19TH SEPTEMBER AT RAY'S NURSERY STARTING AT 9AM

Dear Members,

Soon I hope that the weather will start warming up heading into Spring to make our workshops a little more comfortable.

In October we will be displaying our suiseki at the School of Bonsai Show as we have done in the past few years. Every year we have a different theme to encourage visitors to appreciate stones in a different way.

This year our display will have tiered stands with both suiseki, a small bonsai, a little statue and a trailing plant all on the stand to make the artform a bit more interesting to the public. Overseas this type of display is quite prominent not only at their bonsai shows but also, I have seen this arrangement in the many stone books that we have between us to show exactly that type of display. So, at our next meeting can you please bring the tiered stands (no ornaments or trees, only the stands) that you have to use so we can see what we have collectively between us.

After we have this show-and-tell about the October show, we will resume our workshop with a daiza workshop.

At the last workshop we all did hot-glue-gun daizas on our small redundant stones to give away free to the children who come to the show with their parents. Hopefully, we can entice the younger generation to appreciate stones and learn from them. We all had great fun doing this activity and it was amazing to see an ordinary little stone turn into something quite special. Once they had their 'little daizas' finished it was hard not to save a few for ourselves as they turned out so well! We used black and brown sticks in our hot glue guns and the result was amazing as the 'stands' looked just like the black glossy carved daizas on larger stones from China etc. I hope that this little project that we had will be just as successful and the children will love them just as much as they loved the lucky dip stones that we had last year that were all wrapped up in pretty paper.

It doesn't matter what size or shape of stands that you have to bring along and show them to the rest of us, as this will give a more pleasing show and different show.....hopefully!!

See you all then,
Brenda



Above and left: are some of the small stones with their hot glue gun daizas that we put on them.

ROCKS ARE WHERE YOU FIND THEM

BY Owen Melmeth

(This is a very old article that was written back in 1983, but which is still very relevant today)

In this great country of ours, which at times seems to be all rocks, it's amazing how scarce good ones are for use in rock settings, Saikei and of course in Suiseki. They are almost as scarce as good books on the subject.

When one does find an area of promise it's invariably in a National Park where removal is prohibited. So the search goes on.

In the Newcastle area we have been blessed by the generosity of Normea O'Toole in sharing her knowledge of the whereabouts of petrified wood deposits, and Bill and Jean Pestell with their much sought after greenish Serpentine from up north. This rock is particularly good as it is light and porous as well as coming in some fantastic shapes.

Rocks and their composition are as varied as our trees. I am not an expert of practicing geologist, so any opinions are my own and I will be happy to be corrected.

To find good rock with a natural texture surface in interesting shapes and in a size that one can work and not needing a crane is not easy. Sometimes we look without seeing. One of my pupils recently visited her mother in the country and saw a beautiful lump of rock holding the door open. It had been there for years, but she had never really SEEN it before. She very quickly arranged a swap but in doing so received some strange glances from mother.

Recently in a new subdivision near my home much grading and filling was carried out. Walking around the area I discovered quite a lot of small sandstone which had been lying around the area I discovered quite a lot of small sandstone which had been lying around on top of the ground for a few years and had become eroded by wind and rain thus exposing some ironstone veins. These should make excellent Saikei. This is a type of stone that works well with our trees. Anyone with any doubt should have a look at our Hawkesbury district. How many figs have been collected growing in crevices in such rock.

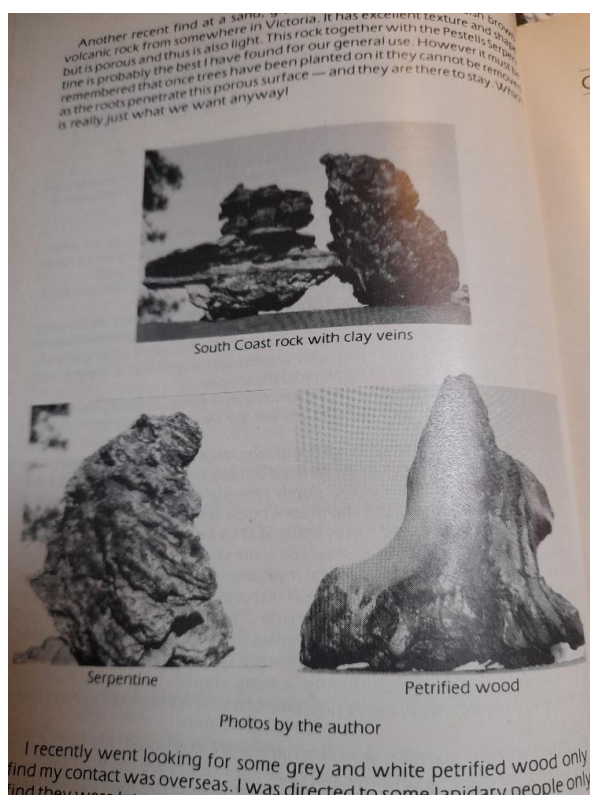
Petrified wood is good for texture, shape and colour but is very heavy. Too many pieces of this in a setting can break your pot as well as your back!

Another stone I have found interesting comes from the South Coast, has a fantastic shape and colour and looks just like our eroded land and seascapes. However, some of it contained veins of white clay and will decompose when wet. Not all do so I have found. Some I have had for 3 years, and it is still satisfactory. One piece reminds me of the Grand Canyon and is a lovely Suiseki.

Another recent find was at a sand, gravel and rock yard and it is a reddish-brown volcanic rock from somewhere in Victoria. It has excellent texture and shape but is porous and thus is very light. This rock together with the Pestell's Serpentine is probably the best I have found for our general use. However, it must be remembered that once trees have been planted on it they cannot be removed as the roots penetrate this porous surface – and they are there to stay. Which is just what we want anyway,

I recently went looking for some grey and white petrified wood only to find my contact was overseas. I was directed to a lapidary club only to find they were interstate. I then went to a third address only to find the poor chap had died the previous day. However, all was not lost as I found some very good river sand, some washed coloured 3mm gravel and an excellent supply of slate.

So you see, rocks are where you find them!!



Above: These are the stones described by Owen in his article.

AUSTRALIAN ROCK

By Niki McCarthy (Northern Beaches Bonsai Studio)

We have some of the most beautiful rock in the world, we can use it to create mini-landscapes, rock settings or simply use it as viewing stones. Rock varies in colour and texture from different parts of Australia. Bush rock (from the Blue Mountains) is beautiful with steel grey and bluish colours that complement our various favourite bonsai trees. Try bush rock with Azaleas, Figs, Junipers or Cedars, just for starters – they look fantastic.

Rock from South Australia (the type used in aquariums, craggy and rust orange in colour is equally fascinating. The beauty of these rocks is that they have holes and patterns like Swiss cheese, some of the patterns form natural 'mini lakes' some have the surface of a desert, or a moon-like surface. This can be a wonderful influence on the theme of your bonsai. Don't follow the crowd, be individual and think about how nature thinks; no two trees are the same. Just as no two natural settings are the same. Rocks can create a desert, lake or craggy ocean cliff – just use your imagination and create a fantasy. Try using a small piece of rock as a subsidiary, plant ferns, miniature bamboo or grass in it for a special effect.

**Bonsai are made by artists like me....
But only God can make a tree!**



Important Announcement

Due to a technical issue, email messages and poems sent to the tselias@vsana.org address stopped being delivered as of September 1, 2026. We are working to get the VSANA email address restored as quickly as possible. Please accept our apologies for this temporary inconvenience.

If you sent an email or submitted poems to tselias@vsana.org in the last ten days, please resend your messages and poems to tselias@msn.com until the issue is resolved. We will notify you when the VSANA email address is on.

