



Brandywine Bonsai Society

Meeting Date: 10:00, Saturday, May 19, 2007

Subject: Ted Matson on Shohin

Location: Brandywine Town Center

Pre-meeting bonsai help: Pat Morris

Cookie person: Eleanor McKenna

All-Day shohin styling workshop with Ted Matson

California bonsai artist Ted Matson will be with us once again. We are going to have a round-and-round workshop in the format we have followed in past years with Jim Barrett and Marty Schmalenberg. This means that after an initial consultation to size up your tree, you will be able to start work – or better yet – see what Ted advises for other trees, then start work.

We plan to continue working until about 3:00 PM with a break for lunch. You could go to a restaurant, but brown bagging would be more time-saving. Look over your trees – shohin, please – and gather your tools. Club wire will be provided.

Dedication of Display Benches in Honor of Jack Billet

Two large display stands that were built with gifts from Jack's many friends and admirers, both in BBS, and around the world, were dedicated early Friday afternoon, May 4.

Felix Laughlin, chairman of the board of the National Bonsai Foundation, spoke of Jack's many contributions to the art of bonsai, and of the esteem in which he was held by the Foundation board of which he had been a member. Jack was remembered as a lively, sometimes mischievous member who also contributed much wisdom and good counsel. His strengths as a stylist and teacher were praised. Of particular note was the enormous task he undertook, with Cheryl Manning, to gather, from John Naka students around the

world, the instructional drawings that now comprise The John Naka Sketchbook. The special mame/shohin bonsai exhibit that he and Dorie Froning presented at the Arboretum three years ago was remembered as one of the best attended presentations ever mounted there.

Brad Billet, Jack's son, spoke on behalf of Mrs. Barbara Billet, grandson, Matthew, and Matthew's mother, Tracy. He recalled the early, and somewhat failure-ridden days of his father's bonsai interest. It began with a Sunset book. Two dead trees in a row only strengthened his resolve to master the art. It began as it had to, of course, with learning to keep trees alive. It went from there to his true passion, styling. Five weeks spent in Japan, doing drudge work for a master, but also soaking up knowledge was life changing. Though Jack was never able to return to Japan as he had wished, the family is seeing that part of his ashes will be buried in the land he so admired.

Jack, with his dear friend, Dorie Froning, started the Brandywine Bonsai Society. He also helped found the Ameriseki Group, a viewing stone society. The plaques on the two stands state that they honor Jack Billet, "teacher and friend." All members of BBS who knew him, and many, many bonsai enthusiasts beyond, know the truth of those words.

BBS was well represented at the occasion by a dozen members. In addition to having a beautiful day, we enjoyed the exhibits, the vendors, and the buffet lunch thoughtfully

provided by the Foundation. It was a day that Jack would have approved.

A Full June in Store

June begins with our annual Brandywine River Museum Show on the 2nd and 3rd. Let Pat Morris know as soon as possible what trees you will submit, and when you could tree-sit.

As most of us know, we had a strange and difficult winter. Your trees might not be quite where you want them to be, but don't be deterred. Most of us have the same problems: these are living things that reflect the vicissitudes of real life.

The annual picnic/auction will be June 16 in Anson Nixon Park, Kennett Square. Look over your trees, pots, tools, and general orientalia. As always, we hope to be educated and delighted by auctioneer Dennis Donald. There will be more on the picnic in the next newsletter.

Brandywine River Museum Bonsai Show, June 2,3.

Our club shows are intended to introduce bonsai to the public and possibly encourage people to get involved. They are NOT masterpiece shows. We want all club members to get involved in some way and not be intimidated by the idea of showing your tree(s). Something we have discussed and I will try out at the June show, is one table of pre-bonsai so that people can see what we frequently start out with. Newer members could contribute to this table. Or, if you do not feel comfortable showing a tree, we can use your help as a babysitter.

Please be thinking about what you will display in our Brandywine River Museum show, and when you can give some time to tree sitting.

Please fill out the enclosed Entry Form and return it to me at the May meeting or mail it to arrive before June 1st. And feel free to contact me (610-869-8401) if you have any questions or issues to discuss.

-- Pat Lucke Morris

Notes from the Recent MABS Festival: A Critique by Robert Steven

I attended one of Robert Steven's critiques, and found that he mainly stressed the same points that he made in his lectures: Find the point of interest in a tree and play it up; continue the main line of a tree throughout. He did not like evenly-contoured solid masses of foliage but preferred foliage with some areas longer and some shorter (an uneven profile with a more natural look).

He did not spend time discussing pots, companions, or stands. He did not approve of "toys" (little figures) intermixed with bonsai in pots. He liked dramatic-looking trees, and his favorite was a rugged pine cascade in a tall, narrow pot. He said that if a tree has a very ancient-looking trunk and nebari, the branches should also look old; he criticized trees that had small, immature-looking main branches and trees with too little secondary branching, as this is a sign of immaturity.

He stressed the importance of logical scale between trees and other elements of the planting, and the importance of perspective in giving the impression of distance to a forest planting. He wanted plenty of empty pot space around forest plantings, and stressed that individual trees in a group planting must be trained and look mature. He was not impressed with some very nicely developed bonsai that did not have a "point of interest".

-- Charlotte Smith

*Moonlight stillness
Lights the petals
Falling . . .falling
On the silenced lute.*

Shiki (1866 – 1902)

Brandywine River Museum Show - June 2 & 3, 2007

EXHIBITOR FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____ Cell # _____

Email _____ @ _____

Tree #1 Botanical name _____

Common name _____

Space (width) needed _____ 2' _____ 3' _____ 4'

Tree #2 Botanical name _____

Common name _____

Space (width) needed _____ 2' _____ 3' _____ 4'

PLEASE bring your tree(s) to the Museum not later than 8:30am Saturday the 2nd and pickup not before 5:00pm Sunday the 3rd. If you need help with pickup or delivery, let Pat know BEFORE the show.

Would you be willing to be an "expert on duty" during the show, just working on trees and answering the public's questions?

What time(s) would you prefer? Saturday ___ 11am ___ 1pm ___ 3pm
Sunday ___ 1pm ___ 3pm

Would you be willing to help "babysit" the trees? Please indicate preferred times .

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Saturday _____ 9:30 - Noon _____ Noon - 2:30 _____ 2:30 - 5:00

Sunday _____ 9:30 - Noon _____ Noon - 2:30 _____ 2:30 - 5:00

(Other times can be arranged if you want to help but the above don't work for you.)

PLEASE return this form to Pat Lucke Morris,
151 Paschall Mill Rd.,
West Grove, PA 19390.

Must have in by May 30th, 2007, so that we can prepare the ID Cards. Thank you in advance for all your help.