

# BCI- Ambassador's Newsletter

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Edition



## BCI Diplomatic Mailbag - The Ambassador's newsletter: Communicating with BCI members around the World

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## Editors Message

Hi to all Ambassadors.

I would like to start this newsletter by wishing all ambassadors a very Happy and safe 2007. This New Year of 2007 is now upon us and Christmas and the festive season is a distant memory, as a New Year resolution I have set myself a task to enter as many photographic competitions that I possible can throughout the Year.

The BCI web site has a large number of competitions open to all levels of Bonsai expertise from the beginner through to the more advanced.

Results of the 2006 round of competitions are on the web site at <http://www.bonsai-bci.com/contests.htm>, all competitions in 2006 were well patronised but certainly this should not put anyone off from entering, you certainly do not have to be a professional photographer to enter as the competition is about Bonsai not photography.

Spend a few moments having a look at some of the winners and there are also a number of new and exciting additions to the BCI web site..

If you are not in it your most definitely not going to win it

Happy 2007.

Ian Glew – BCI Ambassadors Newsletter Editor : [iglew@b022.aone.net.au](mailto:iglew@b022.aone.net.au)

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### **See you in Puerto Rico July 11<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>**

BCI – FELAB 2007 conference in Puerto Rico is on July 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> 2007, if you have not previously attended one of these functions they are outstanding and I would recommend if possible for you to try and attend.

Keep a watchful eye out for the Ambassadors meeting which is always great fun and a chance to meet and mingle with ambassadors from all over the world.

Please bring along ideas and suggestions for improvements to the ambassadors program as you are aware the original concept of this program was about forming together to share ideas and experience. December's edition of this newsletter was almost totally articles and photographs from ambassadors around the world and it was extremely pleasing to me for this to happen, please keep these articles coming.



### **Windswept Style – by Ian Glew**

I have conducted a number of demonstrations at club, public and National level and every time I do naturally research on mainly the style and rules occurs.

Every time a conversation with a very accomplished and well known character in the Aussie Bonsai world comes to mind – my friend John Forrest (Known to many as Morisan)

His words of wisdom have remained with me, the conversation then was when I was very green to the world of Bonsai demonstrating and certainly in front of a group of people who in the main were far more experienced in Bonsai matters than me.

I was saying to him that I hoped I didn't mess up a ( or words to that effect) just before one of my first demos at club level in a few weeks time, I was concerned more for my technical knowledge rather than my ability to entertain.

He said to me that it was not what you knew before the demo but what you learnt along the way and what you gained from the experience; basically quoting the old saying it is not necessarily the destination but the journey that makes the difference

For me never a truer sentence has been spoken, I have learnt an enormous amount about Bonsai from reading, researching styles, listening to people like John and naturally demonstrations. Anyone who has

created a Bonsai is capable of a demonstration and certainly that is how most of the knowledge has been passed down over the Years.

In this article I am talking about Windswept style and certainly I did not realise that some of the extremely unkind statements usually reserved for trees that become literati style are also used for Windswept.

Windswept trees in nature are very dramatic trees normally seen (I was going to say in windy areas but will refrain) around the foreshore, on the side of hills and normally have some type of battle scare against the elements that are trying to do their upmost to destroy the tree or at the very best bend or twist the tree against its normally upright and majestic style.

My original concept of windswept was just that, no real style just a battle against the wind, what I discovered is this is only part of the story.

In my research I naturally turned to renowned authors and their books to gain knowledge. Deborah Koreshoff, a renowned Bonsai artist and author gives a detailed description of what I have outlined above but also adds the tantalising idea of many of the normal styles like formal and informal upright being styled and in their normal form but then restructuring them to demonstrate that the wind has come along and changed most of the branches to demonstrate this.

This was re-enforced recently by an article in the BCI magazine by Master He Gansun. Master He Gansun. Talked about the same concept in this fabulous article and emphasised this with informative photographs and drawings.

Robert Steven is a Bonsai artist who certainly knows about this style and I have had the pleasure of watching a number of his demonstrations and again an article in Bonsai magazine assisted me in forming my concepts of the windswept style his quote in the article -

- The Chinese describe the Windswept Style “In the silence there is movement, in the movement there is rhythm”

I certainly as a westerner do not full understand the spiritual side of Bonsai but the words above certainly made me look at windswept in a different light.

Lee Wilson another Aussie Bonsai artist of some acclaim helped me with the tree selection, naturally a nursery owner and I am sure off loaded some of his surplus stock of juniper's that no one wanted.!

Certainly an attempt at Aussie humour here Lee and I spent quiet some time going over a number of trees to select a suitable tree for the style and certainly my liking, this again highlights that not all stock is suitable for this style and it is not a style you use a tree for that you cant find anything else to do with.

Certainly some words of wisdom from Lee certainly assisted me in my quest for knowledge on the subject.

- “It is a difficult style “(or words to that effect)
- “It is good though as you can break all the rules”

To sum up the road was not long but certainly very interesting and most certainly rewarding, I have tried over the Years to pick styles that I have not previously demonstrated on to force me into the quest for information and knowledge, this quest is more about survival from the very deep, well thought of and tricky question that may come from the audience.

What I have following is not the last word on Windswept but merely my thoughts and the direction that the demonstration I conducted took on the night.

- Tree needs to demonstrate tenacity and visually demonstrate survival against the elements. Many windswept trees in nature are positioned by the ocean where the vicious winds from the sea give the tree a real battle against the elements. Naturally the branches are swept away from the

- windward side of the tree and exposed and bleached wood having the protective layer of bark and cambium layer ripped away with the ever relentless wind.
- The idea of styling the tree in a selected style and then imagining a strong wind having its effect on the branches and trunk is one that appeals to me; the classic styles that lend themselves to Windswept are Informal and formal upright, slanting and cascade.
  - Naturally the tree needs to demonstrate that the wind is blowing and the wind has impacted the tree. No branch should grow into the wind.
  - Jin and Shari will add to the demonstration of the battle being waged by the wind on the tree and the fight and struggle against the elements.
  - Windswept is normally displayed in a shallow pot and in many examples the tree has a large root ball...

The original stock, can you pick the selected front?



The final styled and potted tree



Close up of the crown.



References:- Deborah R. Koreshoff – Bonsai Its Art, Science, History and Philosophy.– BCI magazine with thanks to Robert Steven and Master He Gansun.



## A Raft Style in Nature

Before we left New South Wales we discovered a magnificent lake and park area right in the middle of a city 25 km's out of Sydney called Parramatta – Parramatta Lakes was the name of the area we discovered. A beautiful and to some degree an undiscovered, oasis, in the centre of a very busy and vibrant city.

Shown below are some shots of the lake and surrounding bushland.



We discovered a walking track that circum navigated the lake and on venturing off on the 2 hours walk discovered this amazing and natural “ Raft styled – Aussie eucalyptus (Gum ) tree ” shown below.





This tree was quiet extraordinary and was an absolute text book raft in nature, what a find.



## National Arboretums and collections around the World

I have been lucky enough to visit both the National arboretum in Washington and also Birmingham in England and certainly both countries are to be congratulated with an outstanding presentation of Bonsai..

In both of theses arboretums there are donated trees from some of the better known Bonsai artist within that country,

**Washington** - boast some outstanding John Naka creations. I have shown photographs some of these in the past but certainly no one would tire of seeing these masterpieces.

**Birmingham** – Has many trees from some of the countries renowned artist's.

**Australia** have just commenced preparation into the formation of our own national Bonsai and Penjing Collection, although in the early stages the committee has been formed and initial meetings held, the site has been picked and secured.

Let me know of other National collections and I will include articles and photographs supplied in future editions.

For a look at any of these magnificent Bonsai collections take a look at the three sites below..

**Washington** – Go for a Virtual Tour

<http://www.usna.usda.gov/Gardens/collections/VirtualTours/index.html>

**Birmingham** –For a look at these magnificent Bonsai take a look at the web site

<http://www.nationalbonsaicollection.org/>

**Australia** – Although in its infancy watch the collection grow on the web site.

<http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/nonurban/projects/arboretum.shtml>



### Web site's worth a look.

Below are a small sample of web sites from around the world, please let me know of any interesting sites that may be of interest to other ambassadors.

**BCI-FELAB 2007 Tropical Enchantment** [www.bcifelab.com](http://www.bcifelab.com) all you need to know about the conference – registration.

**Federation of British Bonsai Societies.** <http://www.fobbsbonsai.co.uk/>

**Bonsai in Asia Guide Book -** <http://members.iinet.net.au/~jold/bia/country/index.shtml>

**Australian Association Of Bonsai Clubs Ltd -** <http://www.aabcltd.org/>



### Stone Symposium - Grantville, PA USA – Linda Brant

The BCI Board of Directors held its midyear meeting at the 3rd International Stone Appreciation Symposium held in Grantville, PA, USA, from September 28 -October 1, 2006. The six organizers, Sean Smith, Jim Doyle, William Valavanis, Glenn Reusch, Arthur Skolnik, and Martin Schmalenberg did a stellar job of providing interesting workshops, demonstrations, and lectures. There were two exhibits, one for the organizers and speakers, and one for the registrants. Critiques were conducted on both exhibits. Many vendors were present.

The programs were presented by Uhaku Sudo, Masahiro Nakajima, James L. Greaves, Pedro Morales, Pat Cohen, Jim Doyle, William Valavanis, Peter Aradi, Hideko Metaxas, Martin Schmalenberg, Sean Smith, and Arthur Skolnik.

The topics ranged from display to Ikebana to daiza carving to the History, Mystery & Attraction of Stones. Workshops were conducted by Jim Doyle, Arthur Skolnik, Martin Schmalenberg, Sean Smith and William Valavanis. A surprised special event took place on Friday evening when Masters Sudo and Nakajima conducted a formal tea ceremony for the group.

After the recent BCI convention in China where stone art has such a huge following, it was very interesting to compare how this art is being received in North America. Currently there are events on the west coast and on the east coast. Many in North America have appreciated, collected, and displayed stones for a long while, and now the art form is growing in popularity.

Bonsai Clubs International will be supporting stone art with its sales of **Global Bonsai & Stone Collection Magazine**, more stone articles in **BONSAI Magazine** which comes out under its new name, **BONSAI and STONE APPRECIATION MAGAZINE** in 2007. BCI also hopes to participate in more stone events in the future.

Many thanks to the organizers for hosting the BCI Board at this event



## Closing and next Issue

Well another issue draws to a close and again I wish all ambassadors a Happy and safe 2007.

Next issue, which incidentally marks the two Year anniversary of yours truly being editor, will feature a remarkable Ficus that I challenge the World to match – truly outstanding.

Articles will certainly assist in making this newsletter interesting and certainly all the budding authors out there that want an article published do not hold back in 2007.

Would also love to hear ideas on how you would like the ambassadors program added to or enhanced to make it a more meaningful part of BCI and its membership.

Please do not let this newsletter be just hit the table of the committee meeting and not see the light of day, pass it around the club, use it as an value addition and a benefit of being part of your club.

If any ambassador wants to use an article from this newsletter please contact me and if possible I will supply it to you for reproduction in your own newsletter.

After the last edition I had a number of requests for copies of articles and after checking with the author supplied them with pleasure, have a look at Bonsai in Asia Guide book at the Indian section for an example.

**Puerto Rico July 11<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> 2007 – make it a date and see you there.**

