

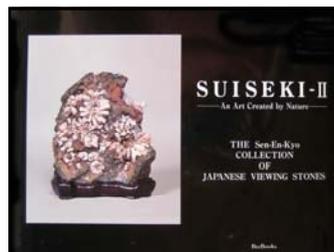


May Program

On May 28th, **Larry Ragle** will show pictures from the book, *Suiseki - II, An Art Created by Nature, The Sen-En-Kyo Collection of Japanese Viewing Stones*, edited by Kin-ichi Yoshimura (Yuji's brother). This book includes suiseki not found in the first book [see April 2006 newsletter] and those of the author and his grandfather. These stones are classified by the location of their origin. Also included is a short history of many of the well known stone collectors from Japan.



Book cover front



and back



Stone of the Month

The idea for this month's stone came from **Linda Gill** and it is terrific. How about your BEST stone? You say you have a lot of BEST stones? A best mountain and a best waterfall? Ah ha! Therein lies the challenge. You will have to be discriminating. This one will be the best of the best. Your stone must be in either a *daiza* or a *suiban* and be prepared to tell us why you feel it is your best. One stone. That's it. Don't get frustrated... if need be, we can have a second best stone another time....

Not Out of the Closet Yet

[It's an odd coincidence (or is it?) that about 4 hours ago I was asked if I was a Buddhist by a guest who was looking at my bonsai. No one has ever asked me that. I had already written the next paragraph two days earlier since I planned to explain what little I have learned about Zen Buddhism but how very important that wee bit of knowledge is to me.]

I'm not a Buddhist. I can't be because I don't have the slightest idea how to meditate. I do try. I just don't know how to focus my mind on a single thought for any longer than a few seconds. Seconds - not minutes or hours. Obviously, I'm not a poet, a philosopher or an intellectual - you already knew that. I have, perhaps by osmosis, developed a respect for traditional Japanese culture while studying bonsai and suiseki with my teachers and friends. However, at best, I learned the mechanics of the arts, that is, using one's brain. Since a year ago April I am more aware of an emotional connection, using one's brain and one's heart in appreciating suiseki and bonsai. And I recognize, in retrospect, that when I am alone working on a bonsai or along a river looking for stones, I am focused - I am in the moment. Why the awakening? *"We are on an endless road to achieve what we are looking for - enjoy every moment along the way - Zen is to be yourself in nature."* **Uhaku Sudo**

Last year, when we went to Japan to study Keido, Mr. Sudo opened our first session by holding up a suiseki and proclaiming, **"This stone is a grand view of nature"**. What did he mean? My first thought was that he liked the stone. Nina and I had brought it, a Kern River stone collected years ago by a member of the Los Angeles Bonsai Club, as a gift. I would realize, eventually, he could have been holding any suiseki.

This stone may remind you of an interesting landscape, a coastal scene or an island.



April Meeting Notes *by Linda Gill*

ANNOUNCEMENTS: **Larry** mentioned various club shows all of which are or have been listed in **Coming Events**. A flyer from Stone King circulated inviting everyone to the Chinese American Viewing Stone Association Exhibition on May 10-11. Hope you enjoyed it!

STONE OF THE MONTH - Stones that look like places we have seen:

Bill & Lois Hutchinson had a pagoda stone and a lone arch stone from Dumont Dunes. **Marge Blasingame's** stone looked like Half Dome and came from Lake Hill. **Harry Hirao** went to Sacramento last week and brought 3 black stones with hollows and a striped stone. He found 40 stones in just 3 hours. Good hunting, **Harry!** **Janet Shimizu's** stone from China was green with white on it. **Akio Okumoto** brought an angled stone that resembled Vasquez Rocks. **Richard Aguirre** had a figure stone (maybe) and a mountain range from the Yuha and a black stone from Garnet Hill. **Don Mullally's** El Capitan stone and mushroom cloud stone both came from the Eel River. **Jim & Alice Greaves'** brought 3 mountains from Nevada, Garnet Hill and N. California. **Bruce McGinnis** had rolling hills. **Linda Gill** showed a stone that looked like a Chinese scroll painting of the mountains of Guilin. **Hanne Povlsen's** picture was of the mountains in Torres del Paine, Chile,

that she saw out her window. Her stones looked just like that and one was Lapis. **Richard Turner** had two Garnet Hill stones, one had thick terraces with overhangs that resembled Chinese ink paintings and the other looked like the bottom of the ocean. Too bad we did not have **Ralph Johnson's** stones at the meeting but we have pictures! Please compare the stones on the left with its look-a-like location on the right.



Ralph Johnson's stone



Mount Fuji



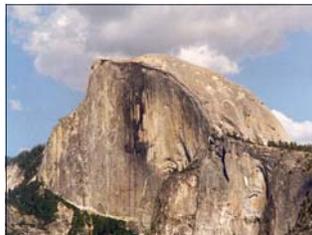
Bill Hutchinson's stone



Reading, PA pagoda



Marge Blasingame's stone



Yosemite's Half Dome



Don Mullally's stone



Yosemite's El Capitan



Ralph Johnson's stone



Kauai's Na Pali Coast



Lois Hutchinson's stone



Cabo San Lucas



Akio Okumoto's stone



Vasquez Rocks



Hanne Povlsen's stone



Torres Del Paine

The 1 inch wide inner margins are designed for use with a 3 hole punch.



April Program Notes *by Linda Gill*

Cliff Johnson - "One of our oldest stone collectors" presented 'Rocks I've Known & Come to Love.'

Cliff likes our hobby because you can take it with you wherever you go in the world. Traveling also presents vistas different from our own. The mountains in China are different than ours. **Cliff** then presented slides of many geological formations from various locations and matched many of them with slides of stones that resembled those formations.

He started with a **Bob Watson** stone that they found the last hour of the last day of a Thanksgiving trip. The hoodoo was compared to rocks in the Oregon Stove Pipe area. A mushroom or tree stone resembled



Monument Valley. **Watson's** stone with a hole looked like a wind carved arch in the Valley of Fire about 35 miles north of Las Vegas. A larger stone attached atop a stem resembled a balance stone. The third **Watson** stone was a black mountain that mimicked a striped butte. A triangular stone (at left) with the larger part at the top resembled a stone in

front of Angel Arch in Canyonlands.

An angular stone with an arch looked like the Alabama Hills and was followed by a slide of Canyon de Chelly. An arch stone that looked like a black ogre (at right) resembled the Oregon coast and the next stone looked like a domed mountain. A thin arch was compared to Delicate Arch in Utah's Natural Bridges.

Cliff followed these with a number of slides without comparable stones, giving us all some goals to shoot for! He showed a double arch in Moab, a thick arch, some sequential arches and wonderful water carved rocks in a river whose location he can't remember (HA!). But it's okay because they were all attached to the bedrock! He said the Grand Canyon also had great rocks but they are off limits, of course. Twin pinnacles and uneven height twin pinnacles resembled Monument Valley and then he showed **Bob Watson's** first uncut mountain. A mountain of **Tony Thomas'** found near Saddle Peak Hill (top of next column) looks just like one at Stove Pipe Wells. A mountain from



Garnet Hill was followed by the **Greaves's** tiger striped stone which was originally **Watson's** (our newsletter, August 2007, pg 4). A balance stone, hoodoos and **Tony Thomas's** first stone, a blue and white mountain were next and a red ball stone completed this section.

A few polished stones were next. There was a beautiful Navajo blanket stone from Death Valley area, a green stone from Victorville, a black & white anvil from Owens Dry Lake. Another tower stone and then a mountain stone (below) that looks like the formation called the Grandstand in the racetrack in Death Valley.



The racetrack (see page 7) is famous for the large stones that are moved by the wind and leave tracks in the viscous mud after a rare storm. Interestingly, the Grandstand is geologically different from all the stone of the surrounding mountains.

A tower stone looked like spider rock and several more towers were shown similar to the rocks in Brice Canyon. We saw Elephant Rock in Valley of Fire, another balance rock from Monument Valley and **Watson's** layered rock that resembles Palos Verdes stone. Finally, he showed **Ralph Johnson's** stone from last year's show that looked like Vernal Falls in Yosemite.

An added bonus was **Bonnie McGinnis'** slide show of our last exhibit at the Huntington. Lovely music accompanied the slides. Thank you **Cliff** and **Bonnie**.

Ask Guy Jim

Dear Guy Jim,

Stones seem to be taking over my life. My wife accuses me of neglecting our home and social relationships. The few friends we still have, quite frankly, think I am nuts. While I feel fine – actually quite happy – they think I need professional help. I thought I would see what you have to say first?

Sanity Suspected, Santa Monica

Dear ... Dear ... Dear and a couple of woes,

As you know I'm not always too diplomatic so I'll cut to the point: you, my friend, are in denial. It is important that you face your addiction head-on by recognizing that you are suffering from at least a mild case of petromania and, perhaps, may even be a latent petrophile. Fortunately, recognition of your aberrant condition is the first step to recovery.

First let me encourage you by noting that petromania is usually curable when caught in time. It is actually quite common with the more benign forms infecting simple rock hounds and the occasional crystal gazer. However, the more virulent form of petromania may result in full-fledged petrophilia known scientifically as *petrophilia var. suiseki*. [Note that one should not confuse a petrofile with a petrologist – those who study petrology, the science and identification of rocks].

Although it may do little to lessen your feelings of guilt, on an historical note, petrophilia has been traced back to ancient China. **Su Shi** (1037-1101) and **Mi fu** (1051-1107) were well-known petrofiles, while the early 12th Century emperor **Huizong** was described as a total petromaniac. (**Hay**, *Kernels of Energy, Bones of the Earth*, pp. 25-27). It might be interesting to note that today's common term "to be stoned" (i.e. out of one's mind) is thought by scholars to be derived from the trance-like state of Zen monks as they stare at *niwa-ishi* (garden rocks) and suiseki.

Believed to have been first imported by Japanese gardeners (who unfortunately did not bare-root their trees), the virus remained largely latent until the 1980's when it suddenly jumped to the Caucasian population, primarily in California. According to the CDC in Atlanta, it has been spreading across the country at an exponential rate ever since and more virulent strains continue to appear. Severe attacks can have lasting, even life-altering consequences. For example, I finally broke down and married **Alice** because she found a stone I needed to complete a thematic group display.

You were wise to consult me before seeking a clinical specialist because once you are identified as a

petrofile you will probably be forced to register with the BLM and other quasi-government entities.

Hopefully I can provide some leads that may help keep your record clean. Obviously, one of the first concerns is to keep petrophiles away from children, especially the younger ones. One must diligently protect them from exposure to stone appreciation by wrapping them safely in surround-sound and nurturing their love of all things instant and electronic. Think for a moment: How could you live with yourself if a child you exposed to suiseki took it upon him or her self to go looking for a stone and in doing so slipped on a rock and bruised a knee or worse, scratched it! Horrors ...

If all this seems daunting, that is because it is. However, there is hope for some. Fortunately, it sounds like your spouse is disease free and may be able to support you. For those families where both are hooked, the situation is dire and usually hopeless. I know of one or two infected couples that have tried to hide their addiction under cover of activities such as bonsai and creative writing, but, alas, they fool none but themselves.

So, don't kid yourself, but do seek out a self-help program. The closest Petrophiles Anonymous Chapter to you is probably the Valley Chapter in Sherman Oaks. As an alternative, you might attend a monthly meeting of Keido Anonymous, a self-help group in Laguna Beach (but you may find their approach to be a bit less tolerant). My only other idea that might help you break free is a long shot, and that would be to bag-up all your best stones and give them to me as a means of discouraging any further collecting.

Good Luck and let me know if anything works. Oh, be sure to write, don't call ... my cell phone doesn't work while I'm on the river.

Guy Jim

The views expressed in this column are personal, perhaps irreverent, irrelevant or just plain wrong and do not reflect the consensual view of California Aiseki Kai. Send your viewing stone questions (or comments) for GuyJim to jimgreaves@roadrunner.com or 1018 Pacific Street, Unit D, Santa Monica, CA 90405 (310) 452-3680





Warning! Get help early or this could happen to you!

~ Test Yourself: Warning Signs ~

Less than 10 points: you still have time to recover quite easily

10 - 20 points: suggests a tendency towards petromania, be vigilant

21 - 30 points: you have a definite problem – seek professional help

Over 30 points: you are an incurable petrophile

1. You replaced the family sedan with an SUV or pick-up truck (2 points); with a Hummer or Ford F250 (4 points)
2. You use arcane jargon, things all become *ishi*-this and *seki*-that (1 point); you use the term *keido* (3 points)
3. You are developing a permanent forward leaning posture (1 point); you have one (3 points)
4. The shelves that used to house your collection of Hummel figures and Toby Mugs is now full of stones (2 points)

5. You dream of stones more than twice a week (1 point); more than you dream of sex (3 points)
6. You surround yourself with odd or exotic paraphernalia such as crowbars festooned with orange ribbons, assortments of mismatched bags, broad-brimmed hats (2 points)
7. You are becoming a connoisseur of sand (3 points)
8. You cannot remember where you parked the car, but you know where you found a five-inch stone 12 years ago (3 points)
9. You have contorted or missing digits associated with inept woodworking and/or dropped rocks (5 points)
10. More of your yard is covered with rocks than with grass (3 points)
11. You have cardboard boxes filled with scraps of paper and old maps annotated with cryptic notes and X's (2 points)
12. You have been seen rendezvousing with weird people in remote places, such as the Yuha Desert (3 points)
13. You know the names of the wife, children, dogs, pet chickens and pigs of every rancher along your favorite stretch of river (5 points)
14. You also know his favorite brand of beer and just happen to have a few cold ones in your cooler even though you don't drink (3 points)
15. You welcome posted signs warning of rattlesnakes, bears and cougars as good omens because it is less likely that someone else has collected this stretch of river (5 points)
16. All the clothes you have purchased in the past two years have lots of reinforced pockets (2 points) and you gave your spouse waders for Christmas (5 points) ... and she liked them (10 points)
17. You have the only house in your neighborhood without a TV antenna, satellite dish or cable hook-up (5 points)
18. You own an inflatable raft (3 points), but still keep checking the recycler for a glass bottomed boat (5 points)
19. You eagerly await the California Aiseki Kai Newsletter each month (2 points); you actually read this entire list (5 points) and calculated your score! (7 points)



Stone of the Month

continued from pg 2



All 3 of Jim and Alice Greaves' stones remind them of Dumont Dunes and other desert scenes



Bruce McGinnis's stone reminds him of green rolling hills.



Richard Turner's stone reminds him of the ocean floor in the Caribbean



Harry Hirao's stone is from the American River



Linda Gill's picture stone



Guilin, China



Janet Shimizu's picture stone



Ralph Johnson's malachite



Machu Picchu in Peru

Not Out of the Closet

continued from page 1

To a master of Keido this stone is a scene of endless proportions – a grand view. To the master, there is a scene surrounding this stone that carries to the horizon and endlessly in all directions. In the master’s eye, every aspect of nature’s landscape is in this scene, including trees. **“This stone is a grand view of nature”** explains to me the foundation of the Keido philosophy of suiseki display.

“Keido is looking beyond what you see.” Uhaku Sudo

When displayed in a *suiban*, a mechanical mind would see the stone, the sand and the *suiban*. The philosopher sees what he wants to see. A Keido master sees an endless scene. (This is why in Keido, suiseki and bonsai do not share a display. It is redundant.)

Coincidence #2. Last month **Cliff Johnson** compared slides of desert scenes to stones that were visually similar (see pg 3). While preparing a Power-Point CD for **Cliff**’s program, I saw the slide shown below. This photo, with its “suiseki display” in the middle, (actually a small mountain range jutting out of a dry lake bed) is a grand view of nature. If you use your imagination to look beyond your suiseki, perhaps you will see its endless scene.

I call this photo “The Answer”.

Next Month- More answers?

Larry Ragle



Coming Suiseki Events

Beyond the Black Mountain: An Appreciation of Color, Pattern and Form in American Viewing Stones

In Washington D.C., at the National Arboretum. This exhibition features viewing stones on loan from **Jim & Alice Greaves**. Sept 4 - Oct 13. Free.

LECTURE: The Art of Stone Appreciation, Sept 7, 1-2:30. Yoshimura Lecture Demonstration Center.

WORKSHOP FOR KIDS: Viewing Stones, Oct 11, 10-12. Yoshimura Lecture Demonstration Center. Fee: \$19 (FONA/NBF \$16) Limited enrollment: ages 8 -14. This workshop will be taught by **Jim Greaves**, a stone collector and master of viewing stone display.

Participants will learn about stone appreciation and create their own display to take home. All materials provided.

GALLERY TALK: Viewing Stones & the Art of Display. Oct 11, 2 - 4. Special Exhibits Wing. Free.

For details, see bonsai-nbf.org/site/calendar.

International Stone Appreciation Symposium

3 exhibits, including a special solo exhibit by **Jim Hayes**, workshops, critiques, vendors, banquet, auction. 15 informative programs headlined by **Seiji Morimae** (Japan), **I. C. Su** (Taiwan), **Xiaoshan Yang** (China) and **Peter Warren** (U. K.). Also featuring **Kemin Hu**, **Thomas Elias**, **Hideko Metaxas**, **Pat Coen**, **Sean Smith**, **Jim Doyle**, **Arthur Skolnik**, and **William N. Valavanis**. For date, place and contact info, see page 8.

Refreshments



Thank you **Harry Hirao**, **Al Nelson**, **Manny Martinez** and **Bruce McGinnis** for the appetite appeasers in April.

May munchies will be hosted by **Emma Janza**, **Linda Gill**, **Kyra Haussler**, **Harry Trieu** and maybe **Richard Turner**.

California Aiseki Kai meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Nakaoka Community Center located at 1700 162nd St, Gardena, CA. Second floor. We do not meet in Nov-Dec.

Contact People

Programs: Larry Ragle 949.497.5626
Treasury/Membership: Nina Ragle 949.497.5626
Annual Exhibit: Jim Greaves 310.452.3680
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Newsletter Committee

May Contributors: Linda Gill, Jim Greaves and Larry Ragle.

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Editor: Nina Ragle

We hope you will participate. Please send any submissions to ragle@cox.net no more than 10 days following our monthly meeting. Thank you!

Ragle
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Laguna Beach CA 92652

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Leaves no stone unturned

See us on the web

aiseikikai.com



Coming Events

AMERICAN VIEWING STONE RESOURCE CENTER

Exhibition: *American Viewing Stones – Natural Art in an Asian Tradition*. Extended until June 15. (Selections from the **Jim & Alice Greaves** Collection), Mingei International Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego. Tues - Sun, Hours: 10 - 4; Go to: mingei.org. 619-239-0003

SANTA ANITA BONSAI SOCIETY

46th Annual Bonsai Exhibit, "Bunjin", May 24-26, Ayers Hall, Los Angeles County Arboretum, 301 N Baldwin Ave, Arcadia. 9-4:30. Sales. Reception on the 24th at 6:30.

DESCANSO BONSAI SOCIETY

38th Annual Bonsai Exhibit, June 13-15, Descanso Gardens, 1418 Descanso Drive, La Canada. Demos, sales. Reception June 14 at 6:30 in Van de Kamp Hall.

INTERNATIONAL STONE APPRECIATION SYMPOSIUM

October 2-5 at the Harrisburg-Hershey Holiday Inn, Grantville, PA. Exhibits, workshops, critiques, vendors, auction. For more info: Glenn Reusch at 540.672.5699 or email stoneshow2008@aol.com (more on pg 7)

AMERICAN VIEWING STONE RESOURCE CENTER

Exhibition: *Beyond the Black Mountain: An Appreciation of Color, Pattern and Form in American Viewing Stones*, U.S. Nat'l Bonsai & Penjing Museum, Wash, DC. Sept 4 - Oct 13. International Pavilion, Special Exhibits Wing. 10-4. (see pg 7)

Sept 24-28 Saint Vincent, Italy ~ Bonsai and Suiseki Exhibition. For more info see the event web site: bci-ibs2008.it/home-en.asp



Here is the link to the May/June 2008 issue of *Golden Statements*. Those without high-speed internet may have better success by clicking on the pdf that's offered on the home page. This is an all new e-zine! Check it out.

<http://www.gsbf-bonsai.org/goldenstatements/>



GOLDEN STATE BONSAI FEDERATION

Convention XXXI, October 30-November 2. Modesto, Doubletree Hotel, 1150 Ninth St. Boon Manakitivipart, Martin Schmalenberg and Tak Shimazu. Exhibit, demos, workshops, bazaar, field trips, critiques, raffles, auctions.