

NEWSLETTER July 2014
Editor Carolyn Sandercoe

☺ **MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR**

I hope all members are enjoying the different material that becomes available to ikebanists in this season. The flowers last so much longer in this cooler weather!

Since the previous newsletter was sent to you, the name-change for our Association has been approved, so it is now "Sogetsu Ikebana Queensland Inc."

In the previous newsletter there was a piece written by Christopher James about his ikebana experiences. He was very fortunate to be able to take up the Norman and Mary Sparnon scholarship that provides three months in Japan with Sogetsu Headquarters lesson fees paid and an allowance for accommodation during that period. Seiseki Umemura also was a recipient of this scholarship a few years ago.

They have both returned to Australia with their knowledge of Sogetsu enhanced, ready to pass on to ikebanists here. All who attended Christopher's workshops in Brisbane on 20 and 21 June are keen for him to return for more workshops. We found him to be skilful in imparting his knowledge and he commented in a very kind and constructive manner on everyone's arrangements. I am sorry that so many of our members missed out on a wonderful two days. Now I hope that many more are able to attend the workshops to be conducted later in the year by Seiseki Umemura.

As always at this time of the year all members will be looking forward to our annual Exhibition, to be held this year on the weekend of 2 and 3 August. It is very pleasing for the committee to see that so many already have volunteered to do some of the tasks associated with this event.

There is still an opportunity for members with teacher qualifications to demonstrate one arrangement. This is a

good opportunity for anyone who has not done it before. Please contact Pat if you can help.

Our "friendship through flowers" is something for us all to cherish.

Judith McCulloch

☺ **BEFORE GENERAL MEETING, MINI EXHIBITION on 4th June**

Topic:- Arrangement incorporating bark.

Unlike most other countries in the world, we are blessed by a large number of our native trees especially Eucalypts and Melaleucas having bark that sheds yearly or regularly as the trunk diameter expands. This gives ikebanists a wonderful opportunity to explore our gardens, parks and private bushland for "artistic bark".

At the workshop we busily got to work with our ideas. Everyone came with a different type of bark. Once complete, each member was given the opportunity to talk about their arrangement and what they planned to achieve. This sometimes elicited some useful discussion and suggestions and we all benefitted. Use of bark can be quite challenging to fix it in position, so it was interesting to see how each member handled that aspect.

Following a short General Meeting, we were treated to a photographic presentation of the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the Victorian Branch, held in Melbourne in May. Judith presented it and we were able to feel a small part of their joy and hard work behind the scenes. They were able to secure Master Tetsunori Kawana's expertise to conduct workshops, open to local and interstate members. The beautiful exhibition was presented by local members at a wonderful art gallery space within Federation Square.

Some of the bark arrangements



Pat with a candlebark eucalypt.



Rosalie with ti-tree bark.



Judith with *Euc. curtisii* bark.



Catherine with ti-tree bark.



Ingrid with ti-tree bark.



Our happily "barking mad" workshop participants!

CHRISTOPHER JAMES' WORKSHOP – 20-21.06.14

Members who attended these workshops were treated to a wonderful two days of inspiration and new knowledge especially of techniques. He also shared with us more background philosophy of ikebana which deepened our ability to create better ikebana, as well as helping teachers in their practice.

Workshop 1: Ka-bu-wa-ke (Textbook 3 Lesson 3). Christopher started with a demonstration using an oval suiban container placed longitudinally towards the front and three kenzans to emphasise the depth of the arrangement. He pointed out incidentally that all the five arrangements in our textbook only used two kenzans despite the exercise being for two or *more*. He suggested to us to challenge ourselves with using more than two. When using a suiban container, ensure all kenzans are not noticeable when the arrangement is complete. At one point he emphasised the importance of being aware of how the material needs to be facing the sun as if it is directly overhead (especially in naturalistic arrangements). This is one aspect of carefully examining the material first before starting an arrangement. His arrangement just used New Zealand flax, bent and threaded back into the stems in a vertical style, repeating the shape at different heights. One long-stemmed pink gerbera was added and the kenzans were disguised by the use of low-angled pieces of more flax.



Christopher's ka-bu-wa-ke in the making.

We all got to work in total silence, except for the sound clicking hasami as we concentrated on our arrangement. Then came the thoughtful critique from Christopher. My arrangement was totally transformed and improved. Plenty of material was discarded due to overcrowding the arrangement and it was made more vertical overall. I couldn't have been happier with the final result – so thank you Christopher! I realised it is so important not to lose sight of the prescribed topic. All the members benefitted from the critiques and one of the best aspects of a workshop was to gain knowledge from other members' arrangements.



Carolyn's corrected arrangement.

Workshop 2: Mass and Line

Christopher demonstrated with a nageire vase using leafless "peach sticks" for line and Camellia leaves for mass. While demonstrating he pointed out that before starting, work out with the material to be used, which element (line or mass) will be the subject (dominant). Finish arranging the subject first, before starting on the other element. The mass must have rhythm and movement (not just a blob!). For line, look for the line in the material and then make it your own by careful bending, trimming etc.

Some philosophy and tips Christopher shared.

- His goal as a teacher is for his students to be better than himself.
- Ikebana has no secrets. If he learns something from someone else, he shares it freely so that all benefit.

- "Shin" in Japanese can mean **spirit** or **truth**, the **true line**.
- Water can mean **spiritual purity** – a meaning that is almost worldwide in religions and philosophies.
- Material in arrangements doesn't have to be in water, but it must not wilt for the duration of the arrangement.
- In a nageire arrangement using line material either side, make sure the two lines created are slightly off-centre [nature is not perfect –Ed.]. It is also a little playful. If the ends of each piece of material are from the top of the stem, it may be called the **infinity line**.
- When viewing the arrangement, it should be designed so that it is best viewed about one metre away. At this distance, if the techniques (eg wire) used are not visible, then the arrangement is satisfactory.
- Always bear in mind the importance of variation of texture in an arrangement.



Christopher's demo.



Sue.



Rosalie.



Carolyn.



Fran.

Saturday 21st: Construction Techniques followed by arrangement in the afternoon.

The morning was filled with learning construction techniques such as using dowel and screws for firmly connecting large diameter materials such as branches or bamboo. Correct wiring techniques were demonstrated for several situations, and the use of crossbars for spherical containers with small openings. These techniques were practiced in the formation of the basis for completing an arrangement in the afternoon.



Christopher demonstrating various techniques.



Catherine sawing. Christopher assisting Vernisher.

He explained very clearly how to use the techniques.

- When cutting pieces of straight branches, make sure they are at different graduating lengths or all the same length. Otherwise they look higgledy-piggledy or messy.
- When using screws, counter sink them slightly with a slightly wider drill bit.
- Use the right size Phillip's head screw in the drill so that it doesn't wobble when drilling.
- To hide the screw, use a texta pen or piece of glued bark of the same colour.
- Skewers (eg kebab sticks) are good to use for slender bamboo varieties, instead of dowel.
- Skewers are useful so long as they do not carry any weight. Both skewers and dowel are best used in conjunction with paper glue to prevent material turning later.

Carolyn Sandercoe

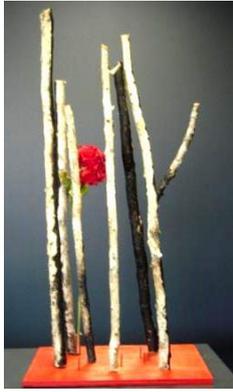
Some completed arrangements



Vernisher.



Judith.



Val from Byron Bay.



Pat.



Carolyn.



Sue.



Catherine.

☺ ANNUAL EXHIBITION WEEKEND OF 2-3 AUGUST 2014

Set-up is on Thursday and Friday from 10am to 4.30pm. Please bring trade table materials during these days and food on Friday.

Please contact the following Team Leaders if you can help at the Exhibition:

- **Trade Table: Robyn Cuming**

Only Ikebana related items for the trade table. Please price items you are selling with a photo of the containers etc.

The association will keep 20% of the sale price of goods sold on behalf of members and other people (other than those who have helped in some way).

Potted plants good for Ikebana and cuttings will also be welcome. Spare bubble wrap and plastic bags are required for wrapping please.

- **Kitchen: Ingrid Kivikoski**

Cakes, slices etc. required on the Friday please. Cost of tea/coffee and two pieces of cake etc. will be \$4. Tea/coffee only will be \$2 – can have refills.

- **Front Door: Del Blackburn**

Entrance price for the public is \$4 Hands-on class \$3 (max 15 people)

All exhibitors are being reminded that their forms need to be returned by July 15. If you have any problems meeting the deadline, please contact me. Thanks, Pat.

☺ MEMBERS' NEWS

Introduction to one of our new Committee Members for 2014



☺ VERNISHER WOOH'S BIOGRAPHY

I am Vernisher Wooh and was born in Singapore. In my younger days, I was living in surroundings close to nature where my neighbour also had an orchid garden. The orchid is Singapore's national flower. My father was the owner of a confectionary factory. At that time, Singapore had not yet gained

independence. Singapore is a multi-cultural country, so I am able to speak three languages and four Chinese dialects.

After Singapore gained independence in 1965, the natural surroundings were soon gone with the building of skyscrapers. From the age of eight, I had learnt the art of calligraphy and in my leisure time, I would enjoy practising calligraphy. After completing high school, I studied economics at the Singapore Institute of Management.

My husband-to-be and I first met when we were in high school. At that time, we were just friends. After I completed tertiary education, I went to work for his father. We then married in 1981 and afterwards had a daughter. After working at my father-in-law's company for a few years, my husband and I then set up our own business. At that time, I then had the time to learn western flower arrangement, play golf and go horse-riding. After we migrated to Australia, I continued my western flower arrangement lessons. Upon recommendation from a friend, I was introduced to Mary Jane Ramsden in Brisbane and began learning Sogetsu Ikebana. A few years later, Mary Jane discontinued teaching I continued lessons with Pat Mackie.

My strong passion for Sogetsu Ikebana has led me to Tokyo several times to attend Sogetsu annual exhibitions and also to attend their seminars and workshops. Within these few years, I have now also begun teaching students in the art of Sogetsu Ikebana.

Vernisher Wooh

☺ MEMBERS IN OUR THOUGHTS ☺

The Committee is aware that a number of our valued members have been facing health challenges lately, and we all wish them all a speedy recovery, and return to normal activities as soon as possible including ikebana. ☺ ☺

☺ PAT'S CLASS--AN INTERESTING ACTIVITY

Please see below a photo of an "in class" sketching class given by Helen Bartley 16th June. Helen is a very experienced artist and with her help we were able to sketch our arrangements. The class from L to R: Catherine Purdon, Janet Killoran, P.K. Loo, Helen Bartley, Vernisher Wooh, Ingrid Kivikoski, Del Blackburn, and Eyres Jones.



Pat's class and their completed sketches.

☺ OUR NEW IKEBANA WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK

These extensions to our Branch activities are now fully functioning due to dedicated work by Judith, Rosalie (website manager), Ingrid (Facebook manager) and Philip Hartle (company employed to design it). Please see address on Newsletter head. We urge members to view the website. It is regularly updated especially the Art Gallery arrangements and Newsletters when produced. Facebook photos are added to most frequently. We urge members and other readers of our website to join Facebook, and if necessary, please contact Ingrid to help get you started. We would appreciate it if members and anyone interested to visit our website/Facebook. Please view the arrangements and tick "like" if you like the arrangement. This will give us an idea of how many people are viewing Facebook.

☺ ITEMS OF INTEREST

Members will be interested to know that the Curator of the Brisbane Botanic Gardens, Mr Ross McKinnon AM is retiring at the end of July. We are grateful for all the generous support and help he has

given to our Association, including collection with his supervision, certain materials from the Gardens for Exhibitions and special demonstrations. We wish him and his wife a long and enjoyable retirement and no doubt he will still be active in garden associated occasions. Thank you Ross.

☺ INTERESTING OPEN GARDEN

Under the Open Gardens Scheme, John & Margaret Harper would like to welcome the public to "Magnolia Close". An ancient pristine rainforest forms a stunning backdrop to the delightful mixture of cool-climate and colourful tropical plants in this lush garden. Borders brimming with magnolias, camellias, azaleas and standard wisterias thrive under mature jacarandas and poincianas, while superbly crafted stonework complements the beautiful plantings. Three original avocado trees, which produce hundreds of avocados each year and were planted more than fifty years ago, remain at the rear of the house. Under their generous canopy are maples, camellias, begonias and other shade-lovers. The rear of the garden overlooks State Forest. From a charming nook surrounded by vibrant salvias, there is a spectacular view to Mapleton.

On Saturday at 11.30am there will be an auction of **COLIN CAMPBELL'S MEMORABILIA** to raise funds for the creation of a relaxation area for visitors and patients of the Maleny Hospital.

AUCTION: Saturday 11.30am.

DATE: 26 & 27 July 2014. **TIME:** 10am to 4.30pm.

ADDRESS: "Magnolia Close", 133 Flaxton Mill Rd, Flaxton.

ADMISSION: \$8 (under 18 free), Open Gardens Australia: 25 Years and Growing. www.opengarden.org.au

☺ QUOTE FROM "JAPANESE FLOWER SYMBOLISM" by Alfred Koehn 1940

Earlier in the year I [Ed.] started with the Lotus, so now it is wintertime, I thought quoting from the page on Camellia would be appropriate. The print illustration accompanying the text is hand tinted.

"Lo! Camellia blooms fell down
And split the rain of yesterday.
Buson.

CAMELLIA

For the period of almost two months in the early year, the Camellia blooms in all the charm of its fragrant beauty. Camellias that grow in Japan are full-petalled and quite large, and the glossy oval leaves as well as the blossom itself, receive special attention in flower decoration. Both the red and white varieties enjoy great popularity, often being combined with Willow. None too happy is its symbolism, for the manner in which the flower drops bodily from the stem instead of falling petal by petal, suggests the idea of a beautiful life brought suddenly to an end.



Camellia Rikka

☺ NEXT NEWSLETTER

Would contributors please send Carolyn contributions formatted in Arial 12 point. If possible, use two spaces between sentences. Your editor is only semi-

computer literate, and any thing that makes it easier is much appreciated. Thank you one and all for contributions to this newsletter. I would like to gratefully acknowledge my long-suffering husband, David, for his willing help when unexpected things happen on the computer (much of the time in fact!).

I would also like to acknowledge my gratitude to Judith for the production of the last newsletter at short notice when I was unable to do so.

the first year I also started learning Sogetsu Ikebana in Yatsuo, Toyama Prefecture, Japan.

☺ A PHOTO FROM YESTERYEAR



Carolyn [Ed.] in winter kimono taking instruction from her Teacher Mrs Miyata and serving her sister Helen, when in Japan in 1973 as Rotary exchange student. It is hard to believe it was 43 years ago –