



SOGETSU IKEBANA QUEENSLAND INC.

<http://www.ikebanabrisbane.org.au>

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Director's Message.

April 2020

Welcome to the April Newsletter which sees us experiencing difficulties and hardships which we have not ever come across before. It is hard to comprehend what the World, as a whole, is going through at the moment but I am hopeful that if we all stay home and keep our social distance, this terrible period will not be with us for too long.

As a result of this invisible and insidious virus, several Ikebana activities which were planned for 2020 have unfortunately had to be cancelled or postponed. One of the main disappointments has been the cancellation of our Sogetsu Ikebana annual exhibition which was to be held on 22 and 23 August at the Brisbane Botanic Gardens Mt Coot-tha Auditorium. The Auditorium will be closed for all functions until 31 August 2020. Our Association has been exhibiting at the Mt Coot-tha Auditorium continuously since 1974.

Because Council libraries and meeting rooms are also closed, our workshops which were set down for the first half of the year, have had to be cancelled. I am sure we were all looking forward to Vernisher's workshops in May, to gain from her the wealth of knowledge she received during the three months she spent in Tokyo on her Norman and Mary Sparnon Endowment Scholarship.

Iemoto Akane's (60th birthday) celebrations, "Akane Festa", which was to be held at the Sogetsu Kaikan at the beginning of March, was also postponed until later in the year. See Iemoto Akane's message of support further in the Newsletter.

It was disappointing to learn about the postponement of the Ikebana International Lismore Chapter #32 60th Birthday Celebrations which were to be held in Ballina, New South Wales, in March. Many of us had planned little mini breaks away to combine with this event. We will have to wait for the rescheduling of these celebrations to see Seiseki Umemura's wonderful demonstrations.

The Australian Sogetsu Teachers Association Inc., NSW Branch, 60th Birthday Celebration in Sydney, has been postponed as well. Our Iemoto Akane Teshigahara was to conduct workshops and demonstrations during the week commencing 9 November. This is a huge disappointment to all those Sydney members who have put so much into the organisation of this event, and to those who had planned to attend, but I am sure the rescheduled one will be worth waiting for.

It's not all doom and gloom however, as several of our members have found interesting and innovative ways to continue their ikebana journey. Pat Mackie, for example, a Teacher of long standing, has continued to supervise her students, from a distance, by critiquing their work and providing feedback, using photos of their arrangements over WhatsApp. It's got to be time consuming and challenging for Pat to offer advice from afar, but it's certainly appreciated by the students and is keeping the spirit of Sogetsu alive and well!

In addition, whilst we are unable to continue to exhibit at the Queensland Art Gallery, we are working in partnership with the staff there to provide photos of Ikebana arrangements which they will place in the Gallery's social media channels. It's a great example of finding an innovative way to keep beauty in this world, and to continue the wonderful association with the Gallery.

As 2020 is going to be a year that each and every one of us will not forget, let's all try and make a difference by brightening up our lives, and the lives of those we love, by continuing to create our beautiful Ikebana arrangements and make them visible in the best way we can.

Stay safe and well. Catherine Purdon

Sue Poole's departure from the Sogetsu Ikebana Queensland Management Committee

Catherine Purdon

Sue Poole has been a member of our Management Committee for almost ten years.

Sue has been a great support to Sogetsu Ikebana Queensland, and to me, over the last six years as Secretary and prior to that, as Treasurer for three years. Sue's sensible and practical approach to issues was always welcomed and she will be missed from our Committee group.

Sue's departure from the Management Committee was going to be recognised at our Annual General Meeting on 18 March 2020. Unfortunately, due to the unforeseen events brought about by the COVID-19 virus that are taking place at the present time, this couldn't happen. A thank you gift and card has been sent to her, on behalf of the Committee and Sogetsu members.

Sue will continue in her Sogetsu Ikebana Teaching capacity and we wish her well for the future.



Message of Sympathy from Iemoto Akane Teshigahara, Sogetsu School of Ikebana

Sogetsu School of Ikebana offers sincerest condolences to those who may be directly affected or indirectly affected by COVID-19.

Iemoto Akane Teshigahara expresses her sympathy and support as follows:

I'm terribly sorry to hear that the new coronavirus infection COVID-19 has claimed lives and is making people seriously sick. Let me send my heartfelt encouragement and support to all, now we are fighting against this invisible virus in Japan and around the world.

Right now, our activities which we have taken for granted have to be cancelled or restricted to prevent spreading the virus. I feel that the immense anxiety is foremost in everyone's mind. Under such a situation, however, we need to keep calm and considerate to others around us in every possible way. We, the Sogetsu School, have been arranging flowers believing that ikebana has no national borders under any circumstances and that flowers can bring happiness and peace of mind equally to all the people around the world. I believe, just as we arrange flowers thinking of viewers, we can overcome the current danger by supporting each other mentally and sharing knowledge.

Hoping to get back to those peaceful days when we can enjoy Ikebana together.

Judith was a much-loved member of our Association, who sadly passed away on 1 March 2020. Judith was involved with Sogetsu Ikebana for many years in various capacities. I believe she became a member of the Management Committee in 2000 and continued in various roles until she stood down from those duties in 2016. During that period, Judith was Secretary for two years in 2000 and 2001; and she was Director on two occasions, for one year between 2005 and 2006 and then again for two years between 2012 and 2014. She was a much admired Sogetsu Teacher, commencing teaching around 2003, until 2018. Judith was instrumental in setting up the Sogetsu Ikebana Queensland website in 2009 and was also our Newsletter editor from 2016 until 2019.

Mr John Massy, our Patron, presented Judith with a Local Life Member Certificate at the Annual General Meeting in March 2017, an honour which I know Judith was thrilled to receive. This was in recognition of her long and dedicated service to Sogetsu Ikebana Queensland. Sogetsu Ikebana celebrated its 90th Anniversary that year, making Judith's award even more appropriate.

Judith played a huge role in the gathering and recording of information for *Under the Grass Moon*, a printed publication of Sogetsu Ikebana Queensland's members' involvement in workshops, activities and events, over many years, along with numerous photographs. This publication covered the period from 1963, when Brisbane had its first Sogetsu Ikebana lessons, taken by Norman Sparnon, through until 2003, Sogetsu Queensland's 40th Anniversary. It was through Judith's initiative and drive that the Sogetsu Ikebana Queensland Inc. Rules 2011 came into being. She tirelessly collated these Rules, ready for approval by the relevant Authority.

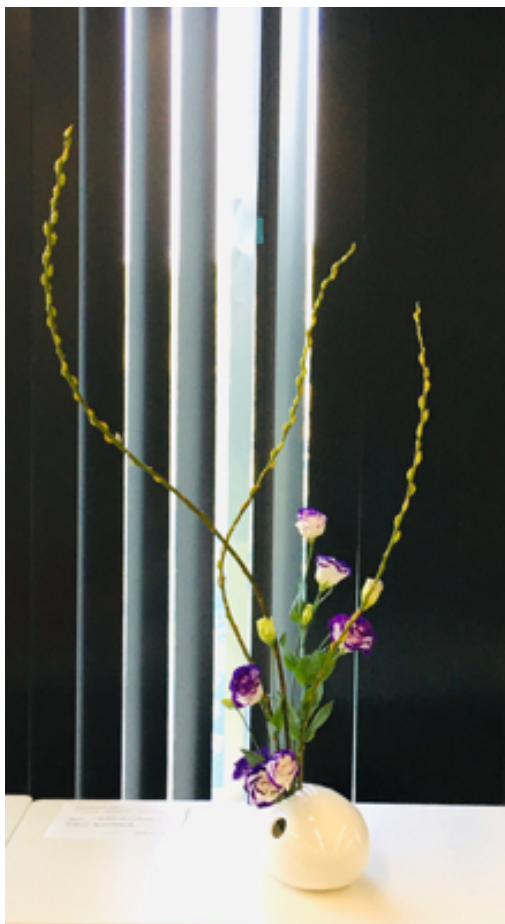
As was noted in the February Newsletter, Judith's love and enthusiasm for the art of Ikebana was a lifelong thing, evidenced by her attending a Sogetsu Ikebana class in Tokyo in November 2019, despite her failing health, along with her two daughters, during their holiday in Japan.

Judith will be sorely missed by her many friends both within the Queensland Branch, other Sogetsu Ikebana Branches throughout Australia and New Zealand, as well as staff and members of Sogetsu Foundation in Tokyo. A note from Sogetsu Foundation states, in part "It is a great loss to all Sogetsu people, not to mention to Queensland Branch, as she has been such a capable and experienced Sogetsu Ikebanist and had made so much contribution to us all."

Judith was especially supportive of me and helped me many times in my position as Director. I will miss her, as will the rest of our Ikebana family.

At Judith's funeral in Toowoomba on 16th March, Ikebana arrangements were done by Pat, Wendy Malloy and Margaret Kortbaek.





Judith's final arrangement at
Sogetsu Headquarters,
November 2019



Judith's arrangement in the 1999 Sogetsu Exhibition at
the Brisbane Botanic Gardens



April 8, 2014 this photograph was uploaded to the Sogetsu Ikebana Facebook Page.

Last year we celebrated 50 years since Sogetsu started in Queensland and we invited Seiseki Umemura to Brisbane to do a Celebratory Demonstration after our AGM in March.

The 'frame' arrangement was done in honour of one of our most senior & longest serving members - Nora Dyer who had just passed away. We were honouring Nora Dyer that day and now we are remembering Judith (standing to the right), another long serving member of Sogetsu Ikebana.

Sogetsu Ikebana Presentation: Tamborine Mountain

Vernisher Wooh, together with her students Ikuko Okada (Brisbane), Joanne Russell (Gold Coast) and Masako Morrison (Gold Coast) presented an introduction to Sogetsu to members of the Tamborine Mountain Garden Club on 10th March, 2020.

Masako opened the presentation with a brief history of the formation of Japan's established Sogetsu Ikebana School, followed by an outline of the Queensland branch's focus and activities.

Several Sogetsu Ikebana styles were demonstrated. A Moribana basic style was arranged by Masako followed by a number of diverse free style arrangements by Joanne, Vernisher and Ikuko, each capturing the attention of the curious onlookers.

Right from commencement of the first demonstration, the audience of plant lovers more familiar with European flower arrangements, went quickly from intrigue to enthusiastic verbal interaction.

The presentation concluded with Ikuko inviting the audience close up for her demonstration and explanation of some tricks and techniques, and many more questions, over canapés, sweets and drinks.

From the interest shown by Garden Club members, we feel that the members who attended the presentation, now have a basic appreciation of Sogetsu and a few will develop further interest in the art of Ikebana.



Masako, Vernisher, Ikuko and Joanne



Ikuko Okada



Masako Morrison



Vernisher Wooh



Joanne Russell

Workshop led by Chieko Klerkx held on Saturday 22 February 2020



This workshop was a little different in that you were asked to bring along material and a container to do a free style arrangement. The material each individual brought, and the container, was then passed on to another person for them to take on the task of creating an arrangement using this unfamiliar material.

This was a fun workshop, particularly as it meant some of us had to use material that we would not normally choose, hence a "challenge".

Thank you to Chieko for conducting this workshop and giving us some thoughtful critiques.



It was with great regret that, in the first half of March, I decided that because of the risks of students attending classes potentially coming in contact with a carrier of the coronavirus, classes would have to be suspended for the time being.

However, lack of physical classes does not mean that practicing ikebana needs to be suspended. Nicole Dorner-Scales did fantastic work quickly establishing a Whats App site that allows all of us to show our arrangements, and for comments to be given on these arrangements.

This system is a modern take on the correspondence classes that the founder of Sogetsu in Australia, Norman Sparnon, used to run from Brisbane for people in the more distant parts of the country. He would post out instructions giving the theme for an arrangement, and students would duly send back photos of their arrangements for Norman to comment. Which he would provide by return mail.

How lucky we are now to have modern technologies that allow us to post our photos online and to have virtually instant responses and comments by return.

The process has been a steep learning curve for me as a teacher. Our physical classes always have a theme, and students respond to that theme in making their arrangements. And when I am commenting on a student's arrangement, I can suggest potential changes and the student can explore these changes in real time. This process is an interaction between the student and myself that, albeit unsaid, takes account of personality, experience and all the other things that comprise social engagement.

In our Whats App process, the interactions are perhaps more remote and, while I can make my comments, and the student can respond, there is perhaps a lessening of the personal exchange. So I am having to learn how to best present my comments and suggestions to achieve the best outcome for student and for teacher.

One advantage of the Whats App system is that all students can see all arrangements, not limited to the physical class that they attended, and this exposes them to a wider range of ideas, demonstrated techniques and personal idiosyncrasies expressed in the arrangements. And anyone can make comments on any arrangement.

And of course a great benefit of the Whats App process is that it means all the members of our Sogetsu branch can and are encouraged to keep in touch with each other, to keep the branch alive and well, awaiting the time when it is safe for physical classes to resume.

Our family through photos.

The students below have all been awarded Certificates since the last Newsletter. Congratulations and thankyou to the teachers involved.



Robyn Tabor received her 2nd certificate



Wendy and Belinda

Pat's classes have been prolific with five students receiving their level 4 Teacher's Certificates.



Amanda



Nicole and Julie



Workshop with material supplied by Pat. She supplied bauhinia branches which were stripped, wired and then used in arrangement. Here Amanda added a sunflower to her arrangement.

Pat's What's App Lesson



Pat Mackie
Hi Chi
What you have done is more like an arty installation which is very nice but would you class it as an arrangement?

3:50 pm



Pat Mackie
Yes! Yes! Yes! Chi , that is magnificent I liked the other one very much as well but this is certainly a great arrangement x Pat

4:48 pm

Apps

I use an app called **Touch Note**. It is a type of virtual postcard. You upload a photo and then you are able to write a short note to the person before adding an address. A great way to keep in touch in these times of social isolation. I have used this program whilst travelling overseas as the postcard is usually delivered within the week. Happy correspondence!



There are a couple of apps available that allow you to remove backgrounds and shadows if you are wanting a particularly clean background to a photo.

Nicole uses an app called **Foto Fuse**. It works well and gives you a clinical white background.

Pat and I also use **Retouch**. This program allows you to remove objects and lines as well as making other adjustments.



Gillian's first demonstration from book 5

Thank you to Judith for her many years as editor of Sogetsu Ikebana Queensland's newsletter. The newsletter is a chance to keep up with current events, ensure we know what is coming up and share the joy we all feel through ikebana. Newsletter items are always welcome. Contact me through whosk2@gmail.com

Regards

Wendy Hoskin Editor