



Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Celebration

To celebrate the Museum's 25th Anniversary, the U.S. National Arboretum hosted an "Asian Arts Festival" on April 27-29, 2001. Co-sponsored by the Arboretum, the National Bonsai Foundation, the Potomac Bonsai Association and the Ikebana International, the



Left to right: Dr. Marc Cathey, Former USNA Director; Dr. John Creech, Former USNA Director; Dr. Thomas Elias, Current Director, and Dr. Floyd Horn, Administrator, Agricultural Research Service.

Festival featured a display of selected bonsai, ikebana and viewing stones, as well as the six winning pots of the

First North American Bonsai Pot Competition (see story below). In addition, as anniversary gifts to the Museum, eight bonsai masters from Japan donated ten bonsai, including seven satsuki azaleas, a *Camellia*, a *Eurya* and a *Jasmine*.

The Festival started with a ceremony on Friday to pay tribute to these distinguished Japanese benefactors: **Mr. Hirosumi Ichihara**, Chairman of the Japan Satsuki Association (JSA), **Mr. Masao Inoue**, Deputy Chairman of the JSA, **Mr. Toshikane Kondo**, Director of JSA, **Mr. Masayuki Nakumrua**, Managing Director, JSA, **Mr. Kenji Shibuya**, Managing Director, JSA, **Mr. Takeo Toyoda**, Executive Director, JSA, **Mr. Shogo Watanabe**, Deputy Chairman of JSA, and **Mr. Susumu Nakamura**, President of the Shonan School of Bonsai.

At the afternoon ceremony, Dr. Thomas S. Elias, Director of the U. S. National Arboretum, and Dr. Floyd P. Horn, Administrator of the Agricultural Research Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), greeted

the honored guests and attendees as the 257th Army Band played. Mrs. Toshiko Yanai, the wife of the Japanese Ambassador to the United States, and Satoru Satoh, Minister for Public Affairs of the Embassy of Japan, extended official greetings from the citizens of Japan.



Chase Rosade, NBF Director, and student in "Bonsai for Kids".

Following presentations to the honored guests by Felix B. Laughlin, President of the National Bonsai Foundation, and Dr. Horn on behalf of the USDA (which is the parent organiza-

(Continued on page 3)

Pot Competition A Grand Success

The First North American Bonsai Pot Competition sponsored by the National Bonsai Foundation in association with the Takagi Museum in Tokyo, Japan, attracted over 150 entries in both traditional and modern categories by the February 1, 2001 deadline. The selection panel—**Dr. Kenneth Trapp**, Curator-in-Charge of the Renwick



Bonsai Pot Winners at Anniversary Event. Left to right: Jim Barrett, Dale Cochoy, and Sara Raynor.

Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution, **Warren Hill**, Curator of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum, and **Janet E. Lanman**, an NBF Director, chose 25 pots to be entered in the final round of judging.

These 25 finalist pots were exhibited in the display wing of the **Mary E. Mrose International Pavilion** from April 1 through April 20, 2001. The winners in the final round were chosen by the same panel of judges, and the

(Continued on page 3)

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President's Letter

This year's 25th Anniversary of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum is truly a time for celebration. For bonsai enthusiasts around the world, the Museum is inspirational in so many ways.

We can take great pride in reading Dr. John Creech's wonderful story of how the Museum began in 1976, entitled *The Bonsai Saga: How the Bicentennial Collection Came to America*, published by the Foundation in March of this year. Dr. Creech had amazing vision, and his new work sets forth the miraculous genesis of the Museum.

This year's celebration officially began with the Asian Arts Festival in April. It was gratifying to see so many of the key players who have worked so hard over the past 25 years to make the Museum a world-class center for the art of bonsai and penjing.

We were delighted with the response we received to the First North American Bonsai Pot Competition. Thirty-six potters from around the United States and Canada entered the

competition. We are grateful to Dr. Kenneth Trapp, Curator-in-Charge of the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution, and to Warren Hill and Janet Lanman for sitting on the selection panel. Given the success we had this year, we plan to hold the competition again next year.

I am very pleased to welcome Johann Klodzen as the Foundation's new Executive Director. Well-informed and undaunted by the multitude of challenges that the Foundation faces, she deserves much credit for the success of the Asian Arts Festival and the Bonsai Pot Competition. I also thank her for her excellent work in preparing this issue of the *Bulletin*.

We now look to the future with great anticipation. The renovation of the Courtyard and related areas is our number one priority and will require substantial financial assistance from the Foundation. We also are eager to begin the planning for the World Bonsai Friendship Federation Convention to be held in Washington, D.C. in 2005.

Frederic Ballard Dies

by Felix B. Laughlin

We were saddened by the passing in April of Fred Ballard, the Foundation's President Emeritus. From 1986 to 1996, during the crucial construction phase of the Museum's history, Fred masterfully led the Foundation's efforts to raise substantial funds, design and build new pavilions, and identify the best of American bonsai for the John Y. Naka North American Pavilion.

When Fred came to NBF with his wealth of experience in the law and scholarly pursuits, and a lifetime of interest in the arts, the Museum consisted of the Japanese Bicentennial Bonsai Collection and a dream of building a North American Bonsai Pavilion. When he retired as President of NBF, the Museum contained the John Y. Naka North Amer-

ican Pavilion, the Mary E. Mrose International Pavilion with its world-class collection of viewing stones, the Yee-sun Wu Chinese Garden Pavilion and the Kaneshiro Conservatory to display tropical bonsai.

Fred's elegant words are preserved in many of NBF's most important publications, including the widely distributed pamphlet, "How Do They Do That--Bonsai Technique for Non-Practitioners." Although he credited many others with being the *sine qua non* of NBF's efforts, he was the absolutely indispensable person on our team.



25th ANNIVERSARY

(Continued from page 1)

tion of the Arboretum), the visitors participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony officially opening the Asian Arts Festival weekend.



John Naka at work on "Goshin" during the Anniversary Weekend.

That evening a banquet was held in the Administration Building. The dinner included a spectacular dessert complete with the Museum/Foundation logo and a champagne toast honoring guests. After presentation of certificates and prizes to the winners of the Bonsai Pot Competition, the highlight of the evening was the after-dinner address on "The Founding of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum" by **Dr. John L. Creech**, Retired Director of the U.S. National Arboretum. Dr. Creech, who was the person most directly

responsible for arranging the gift of the original bonsai from Japan to the American people 25 years ago in 1976, regaled the attendees with anecdotes on the background and history of the spectacular and momentous gift. During the reception earlier that evening, Dr. Creech, accompanied by his wife **Elaine**, graciously signed copies of his new book, ***The Bonsai Saga: How the Bicentennial Collection Came to America***. (See separate story on p 5.)

The Festival continued on Saturday and Sunday with bonsai and ikebana exhibits by the Potomac Bonsai Association and Ikebana International, Washington, D.C., Chapter #1. Featured demonstrations included "How to Style a Mature Satsuki Bonsai" by Masayuki Nakamura and Takeo Toyoda, and "How to Make a Forest-Style Bonsai" by Susumu Nakamura. One of the most enchanting events held were the special classes for kids on how to create and style bonsai led by Chase and Solita Rosade.

Saturday was named "**Jules Koetsch Day**" to honor Jules' outstanding contributions over many years to the art of bonsai, including 22 years as Editor of PBA ***Clipping's***. Chuck Croft, President of the Potomac Bonsai Association, presented Jules with a hand-made, free-standing adjustable turntable. In addition, Betty Yeapanis, Associate Editor of ***Clipping's***, gave Jules a Memory

Book containing congratulatory messages and anecdotes from bonsai well-wishers across America. John Naka and Marybel Balendonck spoke of their own humorous recollections of Jules' bonsai exploits.

Complete with a vendor tent and the peak blooming of the Arboretum's world-famous Azalea Collection, the Asian Arts Festival attracted over 15,000 visitors to the Arboretum grounds on both Saturday and Sunday. It was a delightful 25th Anniversary celebration for the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum.

POT COMPETITION A GRAND SUCCESS

(Continued from page 1)

winners' names were announced during the 25th Anniversary events at the Museum on April 27.

The winners are:

Traditional Category

First Prize (\$1,000): **Sara Rayner**
Red Wing, Minnesota

Second Prize (\$500): **Mike Hagedorn**
Oracle, Arizona

Third Prize (\$250): **Mike Hansen**
Veradale, Washington

Modern Category

First Prize (\$1,000): **Jim Barrett**
Arcadia, California

Second Prize (\$500): **Dale Cochoy**
Hartville, Ohio

Third Prize (\$250): **Jim Gremel**
Occidental, California

The six winning pots, which became part of the accessioned collection of the Museum, are on display through July 29, 2001. The pots may also be viewed on the NBF website www.bonsai-nbf.org.

The high level of interest in the competition bodes well for a future NBF sponsored event. Details on this will be in the next **NBF Bulletin**.



Honored Visitors from Japan. Left to right: Mrs. Susumu Nakamura, Sachiko Nakamura, Susumu Nakamura, Hirosumi Ichihara, Shogo Watanabe, Masayuki Nakamura, Toshikane Kondo, Takeo Toyodo, Isamu Enomoto, and Takaaki Anjo.

Museum Courtyard Construction Making Bonsai and Penjing Accessible to All

The long-awaited plan to make the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum accessible to all will get underway after August 1. During this first phase of the renovation program, the existing gravel surface will be removed from the Cryptomeria Walk, the Upper Courtyard, and the Japanese Stroll Garden and Pavilion, and a new drainage system will be installed. The gravel surface will be replaced with an attractive hard surface, which will make the area accessible to handicapped visitors. From August through November, only the Japanese and North American Pavilions will be open to visitors.

The new Upper Courtyard, to be named in memory of **Maria Vanzant**,

will feature a beautiful reflecting pool with a plinth for the display of bonsai, backed by a wall with the Museum and Foundation logo. There also will be a donor recognition wall and a shade arbor in front of the International Pavilion. The construction of the **H. William Merritt Entrance Gate** to the Japanese Stroll Garden and Pavilion will complete this phase.

On October 26, 2001, during the International Scholarly Symposium (see brochure and story below), the Japanese Stroll Garden will be dedicated as the **Kato Stroll Garden**. Then, beginning on November 1, the entire Museum complex will close to the public for the winter months to allow for construction of

the critically needed Grow-Out Area to be constructed at the northeast corner of the Museum. The Museum is scheduled to reopen in Spring 2002.

Future phases call for construction of the **Melba Tucker Arbor** and similar paving work to be completed in the lower courtyard areas, making the entire Museum accessible to everyone. This is a very significant collaborative effort between the public sector and donors across the country and around the world.

Your help is needed in this historic endeavor. If you would like to make a contribution, please send your tax-deductible contribution to the Foundation in the enclosed envelope. We thank you for giving whatever you can to support this effort.

John Naka Bust Installed

A bust of John Naka—beloved American bonsai artist and patron of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum—was recently installed in the John Y. Naka North American Pavilion. This work of art was created by Bonnie Kobert-Harrison, an international artist who presently lives in the Netherlands. The bust is bronze and rests on a 1-ton granite plinth located near John's signature bonsai creation, "Goshin."



John Naka and artist Bonnie Kobert-Harrison with Naka Bust.

International Scholarly Symposium To Be Held October 26–28, 2001

Enclosed in this issue is a brochure and registration form for the *International Scholarly Symposium on Bonsai and Viewing Stones* to be held at the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum during the last weekend in October of this year. This important conference, co-sponsored by NBF and the U.S. National Arboretum, is being funded through the extraordinary generosity of **Mary E. Mrose**, who through her gift is seeking to share her "abiding interest in establishing the National

Bonsai & Penjing Museum as a place of learning."

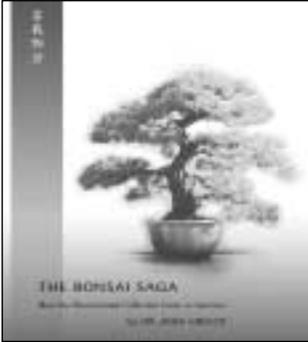
The symposium will be the first of its kind to be held at the Museum. It will provide sessions that probe the history and development of the art and science of bonsai, suiseki and related arts, while also providing demonstrations, including the recreation of a pre-bonsai tray landscape of the Kamakura period. Speakers will include internationally-renowned scholars **Hideo Marushima** and **Arishige Mat-**

suura of Japan, **Dr. Peter Del Tredici** of the Arnold Arboretum and **Robert Mowry** of the Fogg Museum of Harvard University. Presentations will also be made by Arboretum Director **Dr. Thomas S. Elias** and Curator **Warren Hill**, as well as NBF Board members **Larry Ragle**, **Jerry Stowell** and **Bill Valavanis**.

Registration will be limited to 150 participants. Please note that the deadline for registration (see brochure) is September 28, 2001.

The Bonsai Saga

This year's 25th Anniversary of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum is being celebrated by numerous events and commemorations. One of the most significant of these is NBF's publication of **Dr. John L. Creech's** first-hand description of how the original collection of Japanese bonsai came to the U.S. National Arboretum in 1976. At that time, Dr. Creech was the Director of the National Arboretum, and he orchestrated this extraordinary gift from Japan in connection with our Bicentennial Celebration.



It was an honor for NBF to have the opportunity to publish Dr. Creech's fascinating story. Publication of the book was funded by a generous donation from an anonymous donor. The intriguing design of the publication is the work of Lia Marta of Philadelphia.

The Bonsai Saga: How the Bicentennial Collection Came to America went on sale during the Asian Arts Festival in April and is available from the NBF office. (See box on publications on p. 6.)

The unsolicited comments of one reader, Dave Bogan, President of the Greater Evansville Bonsai Society, are set forth below:

"I have just finished reading ***The Bonsai Saga***. I have read many, many bonsai-related books and articles but I have never, ever read one which was more inspiring and gave me such a huge amount of pride in my country and the art of bonsai."

Museum to Host World Bonsai Friendship Federation Convention in 2005

At the recent meeting of the Board of Directors of the World Bonsai Friendship Federation (WBFF) held on June 3, 2001, at the WBFF World Bonsai Convention in Munich, Germany, the North American Bonsai Federation (NABF) submitted a proposal on behalf of the National Bonsai Foundation (NBF), the Potomac Bonsai Association (PBA) and the U.S. National Arboretum (USNA) to hold the next WBFF Quadrennial World Bonsai Convention in Washington, D.C., during the year 2005. This proposal was favorably accepted by WBFF Chairman Saburo Kato and the other WBFF directors.

By WBFF rule and historical practice, the World Bonsai Convention is hosted by the Member Region in which the Convention is held along with the local host organization(s), which in this case would be the NABF as regional host together with co-host organizations, NBF, PBA and the USNA.

John Naka, who serves as President of NABF, had previously written a letter to Chairman Kato, supporting the joint NBF, PBA, USNA proposal.

At the WBFF board meeting, Chase Rosade, who serves as Vice-President of NABF, and Dr. Tom Elias, Director of the USNA, presented the joint proposal to the WBFF board. Ted Tsukiyama,

Secretary-Treasurer of NABF, was also in attendance.

The theme of the 2005 Convention will be: "The World of Bonsai: Bringing Countries Together Through the Art of Bonsai." It will feature all of the major regions of the world with a special effort made to attract registrations from countries where bonsai is still an evolving art.

WBFF was formed by Mr. Kato. Its purpose is to strengthen international friendship through sharing the art of bonsai. Previous WBFF conventions have been held in Omiya, Japan (1989), Orlando, Florida (1993) and Seoul, Korea (1997).

New Acquisitions

In May of 1999, the late Japanese Prime Minister Obuchi traveled to the United States to meet with President Clinton. In honor of the visit, Mr. Obuchi presented President and Mrs. Clinton with seven bonsai specimens. The gift included two *mame* maples, one *Acer palmatum*, one *Acer*

buergianum as well as a juniper, a pine and a zelkova. Since U.S. regulations require that all maples entering the country from Japan must be tested for viruses over two consecutive growing seasons, the four maples have been in quarantine for almost two years.

It is with great pleasure that the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum received all four maple specimens in April 2001 when the plants were released from quarantine with a clean bill of health. Now all seven bonsai gifts are on view for visitors in the Japanese Pavilion.

NBF Publications, Pins and Calendars

The following items may be purchased by mailing a check to: The National Bonsai Foundation, 3501 New York Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002. All prices include shipping.

■ Books

- ***Awakening the Soul—The National Viewing Stone Collection of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum***
Softbound edition \$43.90
Hardbound edition \$128.95
- ***The Bonsai Saga—How the Bicentennial Bonsai Collection Came to America*** \$13.00
by Dr. John Creech, former Director of the U. S. National Arboretum
- ***Forest, Rock Planting & Ezo Spruce Bonsai*** by Saburo Kato \$38.90

- **25th Anniversary Lapel Pin** \$6.00
(silver metal and purple enamel)

- **Commemorative Pin Set (six pins)** \$42.00
(representing the North American Collection, the Chinese Collection, the Japanese Collection, the Viewing Stone Collection, the Tropical Collection and the NBF/Museum logo)

- **2001 Calendar/Postcards (6" x 6")** \$5.00
(special issue for NBF published by the Takagi Museum in Tokyo, Japan)

- **Packet of 10 Viewing Stone Postcards** \$6.00

Forthcoming NBF publications include:

- ***The Drawings of John Naka*** compiled by Jack Billet 2002
- ***The National Bonsai & Penjing Collections of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum*** 2003

Visit the Museum by Bus

For the first time there is direct bus service on weekends from downtown Washington, D.C., to the U.S. National Arboretum and the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum. Now, on Saturdays and Sundays, visitors have access to the Museum via public transportation.

With funding from the Friends of the National Arboretum and the National Bonsai Foundation, weekend bus service was inaugurated in March 2001 between the Arboretum and Union Station, the center-city train station which provides connections to the major airports, train routes and the Washington metropolitan area subway system.

The direct bus line from Union Station to the Arboretum—the X-6

“National Arboretum”—takes about 20 minutes one way and costs \$1.10 per trip or \$2.50 for a regional one-day pass for all bus routes. The first bus leaves the station at 7:55 a.m. and the last bus leaves the Arboretum at 4:56 p.m.

If the route is well used by Arboretum patrons, the service will be instituted on a daily basis next year.

So, bus to the bonsai!

Desert Memorial for Melba Tucker

by Mary Bloomer

When Melba Tucker died in 1999 she left a large void in the bonsai and suiseki world, and in many of our hearts. As a friend, teacher and mentor, she inspired many of us to discover that we were better than we thought we were, because she believed we were. Each of us said goodbye to her in our own way, and in the company of our friends and those who loved Melba. But there was something still left to do—bring her back to the desert.

Melba loved the desert, particularly the Mojave Desert in the Death Valley area. It was there that she went out with Tony Thomas, another early California suiseki expert, and found some of her best and most beloved stones. Three of



Left to right: Peter Bloomer, Lois Hutchinson, Lucille "Lee" Roberts, Mary Bloomer, Bill Hutchinson, Marge Blasingame, Helen Liang and Dien Liang. The wreath was provided by Kay Nagata Komai.

these stones are now in the National Viewing Stone Collection at the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum, displayed in the suiseki exhibit area named in her honor.

Because of Melba's love of "suiseeking" in the desert, it seemed fitting that we do something "out there" in her memory. It took more than a year after

her death to make it happen, but finally, in March of this year, eight members of Aiseki Kai Suiseki Club of Southern California met in the desert to erect a cairn in her memory. We brought concrete mix, water, trowels, a few small stones sent by close friends of hers who could not be present, and a "center-piece" stone. This stone, collected in the desert, had been chosen earlier from Melba's backyard and was engraved: "1917 Melba 1999." Inscribed in the cement base were the words "Loved The Desert."

The location of the cairn, on top of a hill overlooking the desert, and the suiseki collecting area she loved so much, seemed an appropriate place to commemorate her. Bill Hutchinson conducted a memorial service, and then we lingered a bit with our private thoughts and goodbyes before setting off to do what Melba would have approved of most: looking for suiseki.

Changes at NBF

At its 2001 annual meeting this April, the NBF Board of Directors elected three new members: **Jim Hughes**, a volunteer in the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum since 1995 and a member of the Potomac Bonsai Association; **Brussel Martin**, founding owner of Brussel's Bonsai Nursery and organizer of *Rendezvous*, a bon-

sai demonstration event held each year at the Nursery; and **Jack Sustic**, former Assistant Curator of the Museum who has returned to his family ranch in Michigan.

David Garvin, a devoted volunteer in the Museum and a member of the NBF Board for many years, decided to retire from the Board, with sincere thanks from the other directors for his outstanding service and his continuing volunteer efforts.

Harry Hirao, renowned bonsai and suiseki artist, accepted a position as an Honorary Member of the Board.

Johann Klodzen, formerly on the staff of the Gardens Unit at the National Arboretum, became Executive Director of NBF in February 2001. She can be reached at the Arboretum, 3501 New York Avenue N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, telephone (202) 396-3510, and email klodzenj@ars.usda.gov.

First Lady Receives a Copy of "Awakening the Soul"

On April 10, First Lady Laura Bush visited the Arboretum and the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum with a group of 14 gardening friends from Austin, Texas. After touring the Museum with Arboretum Director Thomas S. Elias, he presented Mrs. Bush with a copy of the NBF publication **Awakening the Soul**. The photograph was taken in the Melba Tucker display area of the Mary E. Mrose International Pavilion.



Support The National Bonsai Foundation

The National Bonsai Foundation is a non-profit, section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization established in 1982 to create and support the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum.

NBF raises funds for construction projects, intern endowment and educational endeavors; advises on the selection and maintenance of living plants and artifacts for the Museum's collections; disseminates information to expand the knowledge of the art of bonsai, penjing and related aesthetic subjects; and promotes intercultural understanding and friendship.

The *NBF Bulletin* is sent to all supporters of the Museum twice a year. We thank you for your interest in the work of the Museum and in the care and public display of its bonsai, penjing and viewing stone collections.

If you have any comments on this publication or no longer wish to receive it, please let us know that by writing a note or sending an e-mail to:

Johann F. Klodzen
Executive Director

The National Bonsai Foundation
3501 New York Avenue N.E.
Washington D.C. 20002
klodzenj@ars.usda.gov

Visit the NBF's Website:
www.bonsai-nbf.org

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An envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

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