

# PBA NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 7 NUMBER 3

MARCH 1977

## COMMON DOGWOOD

by BRIAN CAMPBELL

The dogwood is probably best known for its flowers. They open early before the foliage comes out, and are not actually flowers but bracts which surround an insignificant flower in its center. The foliage is also known for its fall color.

The common dogwood (Cornus florida), although attractive, is not often seen as a bonsai because of its large flowers (bracts) and foliage. It is for this reason that one might like to try other species of dogwood such as the Japanese flowering dogwood (Cornus kousa). It flowers in June with four white pointed bracts. And most important, the foliage is smaller. The strange part of this plant is its fruit, which are almost an inch across and look like big crabapples.

Two other dogwoods one might like to try are the Cornelian Cherry (Cornus mas) or the Japanese Cornelian Cherry (Cornus officinalis). Both trees have insignificant bracts but have an interesting fruit. They are like small scarlet plums and ripen in August. These two plants, like Cornus kousa, only put out one fruit per flower.

I should also point out that there is a Cornus officinalis in our National Bonsai Collection.

Looking back on Cornus florida, this species deserves more recognition, especially the variegated ones, perhaps as a seasonal bonsai such as the Satsuki azaleas are for their large flowers. As for habit as a bonsai I found the leaves of C. florida would not shrink like C. kousa, but its branch structure is very impressive.

Propagation: --- I strongly recommend cuttings, air-layering or grafts. If you grow dogwoods from seed it will take many years before they flower or fruit. If you want to collect seeds anyway you should know that Cornus mas, officinalis and kousa all drop their seeds in August and not in the fall.

I should note that most Oriental dogwood species have exfoliating bark, and variegated forms. As for other Occidental species, they are not any better than C. florida for bonsai, and therefore not mentioned.

---Brian Campbell

## THE PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW— A HORTICULTURAL LOVE AFFAIR

The Philadelphia Flower Show -- March 13 through 20 -- offers the bonsai enthusiast a first-class bonsai show, free bonsai lessons and the largest flower show on the East Coast.

The Pennsylvania Bonsai Society holds its annual show at the Philadelphia Flower Show. This bonsai exhibit is exceptional for the high quality of the trees on display and the style in which they are shown.

Mr. Chase Rosade of the Rosade Bonsai Studio has an exhibit at the show and he and Mrs. Lynn Porter will give continuous demonstrations on the creation of bonsai.

The Flower Show covers 190,000 square feet and this year will have 178 major exhibitors. It is held in the Philadelphia Civic Center at 34th Street and Civic Center Boulevard. Hours are 10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays. Cost is \$3.50.

Motorists traveling north on U.S. 95 can obtain an excellent state roadmap with an inset map of Philadelphia from the Pennsylvania Tourist Information Center just after crossing the Delaware-Pennsylvania state line. ---John W. Hinds.

## THE PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Recently, I had a pleasant encounter which perhaps indicates a way in which PBA clubs and members can help to improve the quality of information and materials concerning bonsai that is available from local nurserymen. I was at Stebbins-Anderson's Garden Gate (a few miles north of the Baltimore Beltway, just off York Road on Timonium Road) looking at a bonsai book when the manager, Mike Patterson, stopped and asked if I were interested in the subject. As you can imagine, I got on my podium, rolled up my sleeves and gave him a discourse on PBA, local bonsai activities, etc. I guess Mike is a bit of a masochist as he then asked me what his nursery could do that would be useful to bonsaiologists. By this time we were having coffee in a very fine meeting room they have, available at no cost, for clubs, courses, etc.

Mike's question required serious consideration. Obviously, a general nursery would not find it profitable to stock a great many specialty items and good bonsai are not readily or consistently available on a wholesale basis. However, there are things that nurserymen can do for bonsai within the confines of their operation. This requires some knowledge of bonsai and this is where we can help.

The more nurserymen know about bonsai, the easier they can determine to what extent they want to deal with it. At the very minimum they can be a source of accurate information. Some may want to stock some bonsai containers, books and tools, as well as being able to give advice to customers. Similarly, a knowledge of which common plant materials are of value to bonsaiologists, as well as special plants, could influence what they stock. Some might even go so far as to establish a kind of plant gourmet center where items of special interest are available.

Nurserymen can know our needs only if we tell them. It might be worthwhile for clubs to attempt to provide receptive nurserymen with a short program for their employees to educate them about bonsai. I am sure there are other things that can be done. If you have thoughts on this matter, please write them down and send them to the Newsletter, c/o John Hinds, and share them with everyone. This is one way we can generate ideas that might help nurserymen help us with profit to both.

---Richard Meszler

## WE MADE IT! BICENTENNIAL BONSAI IS READY FOR DISTRIBUTION

By the time you read this, the PBA-published BICENTENNIAL BONSAI - PART 2 will be off the press and in distribution to those who ordered copies.

The 50-page book is chock full of pictures, captions, and text covering all the activities that went on during the five-day Bonsai Clubs International Convention last year. Included are pictorial essays on:

- o John Naka styling that fabulous 200-year-old buttonwood later won at raffle by Verna Hreha of the Brookside Gardens Bonsai.
- o Jim Barrett, BCI president, creating a formal upright from a large foemina juniper.
- o Marion Gyllenswan cascading a Japanese white pine.
- o Dr. David Andrews planting three San Jose junipers on a slab, which became a raffle prize that went to David Brown of the Annapolis Bonsai Club.
- o Dr. Henry Kissinger dedicating the U.S. National Bonsai Collection.
- o Eighteen superb native American bonsai displayed in quiet elegance.

All this and more awaits you in BICENTENNIAL BONSAI - PART 2. It's available for \$4.75 per copy, postpaid. For ten or more copies to one address, the charge is \$4.25 each. Order now by writing the Potomac Bonsai Association, Inc., c/o National Arboretum, 24th & R Streets N.E., Washington, D.C. 20018, or call your order to any of the following:

Jim Newton, 703-938-3584; Mary Houlton, 301-345-3606;  
Molly Hersh, 301-589-3725. ---Jim Newton


A reminder to all club treasurers that PBA dues must be in the hands of PBA treasurer Molly Hersh by March 31, 1977. This is necessary to update the mailing list for the forthcoming PBA election.

# NATIONAL BONSAI COLLECTION CURATOR DEPARTS SOON ON JAPANESE ADVENTURE

Mr. Robert Drechsler, Curator of the U.S. National Bonsai Collection, leaves on a "Japanese adventure" on March 15. He will spend a month in a concentrated study to learn the techniques of repotting and pruning old bonsai. His study will be with Japanese bonsai Masters.

Bob also expects to visit many of the major bonsai collections of Japan and especially wants to visit the Imperial Collection. Time permitting, he also hopes to visit the container makers in Nagoya and Tokoname.

He will visit the Southern California bonsai show in the Museum of Science and Industry in Los Angeles upon his return to the United States. The Los Angeles show runs for the first two weeks of April. ---John W. Hinds



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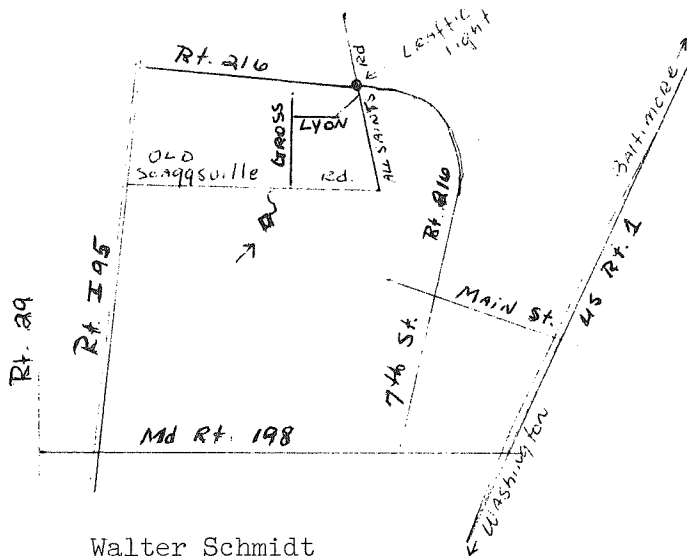
## NOMINATIONS FOR PBA OFFICERS

The PBA Nominating Committee nominates the following candidates for PBA offices for 1977-78:

- President - Richard Meszler, Reisterstown, MD (BBC)
- First Vice President - Joyce Pelletier, Bowie, MD (ABC)
- Educational Vice President - Mary Houlton, Berwyn Hts., MD (BGB)
- Secretary - Milton R. Kidd, Poolesville, MD (BGB)
- Treasurer - Vicki Ballantyne, Severna Park, MD (ABC)

Additional candidates may be nominated by three or more PBA members (include signature and club), submitted to the Chairman of the Nominating Committee no later than 1 April 1977. The chairman is Harvey J. Everett, 3106 McComas Avenue, Kensington, MD 20795. See February PBA Newsletter for election provisions. ---Harvey J. Everett.

## WALTER SCHMIDT TO SELL BONSAI



Walter Schmidt  
9272 Old Scaggsville Rd.  
Laurel, Maryland 20810

Walter Schmidt has advised us he will soon be moving from his beautiful home in Laurel to a smaller place. Walter has quite a collection of finished and started bonsai, most of which he will not be able to move and which he is offering for sale. In his collection is included: azaleas, Siberian elm, hawthorn, crab apples hardy citrus, maples, wisteria, Japanese black pine, Japanese red pine, cork oak, wax myrtle, ivy varieties, juniper varieties. For an appointment call Walter at (301) 725-2580. Walter's trees are both field and container grown.

---Mary A. Houlton

# BROOKSIDE BONSAI BONANZA

Brookside Gardens Bonsai Club was especially honored at the January meeting. Two distinguished guests and old PBA friends, Chase Rosade and Keith Scott, were on hand to hear an excellent program by another distinguished guest, Bob Drechsler, curator of the U.S. National Bonsai Collection.

Bob's slide program dealt briefly with the acquisition of the Collection and the history and future plans for the bonsai pavilion. The main thrust of his program was the care of the trees, and more specifically with the problems he and his assistants have had with specific trees.

He described how one of the crabapples (*Malus spontaneo Makino*), potted in a dark blue container, requires frequent watering because the pot gets very hot in the sun and dries out the soil rapidly. Consequently the size of the leaves are considerably larger as a result of the frequent watering. In other instances he outlined the diseases and pests which had troubled various trees and what methods were used to restore the trees to health. He pointed out on slides how he and his staff are trimming some of the trees to restore the layered effect which rapid growth has been threatening to obliterate. It was nice to know that even the 350-year-old *Pinus parviflora* was causing some problems because the growth was so healthy that the ends of the branches were tending to grow up like a young tree.

For some reason, Bob says, the most frequently asked question from even experienced bonsaiists is "how many of the trees have died?" The answer is NONE. Even the Cryptomeria forest which had a mysterious fungus has now been released from quarantine and will be on display this year. Members of the Nippon Bonsai Association who have come to Washington to visit and work on the bonsai have commented that many of the trees look better here than they did in Japan.

We thank Bob for his exciting and informative talk, but more especially we thank him for taking such good care of the bonsai treasures which we have come to regard as "ours." ---Mary A. Houlton



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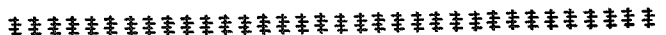
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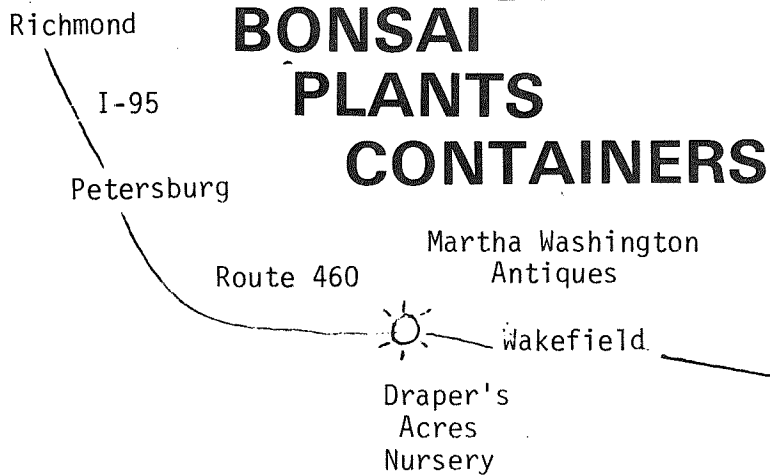
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## BUNJIN — EASIEST OR HARDEST?

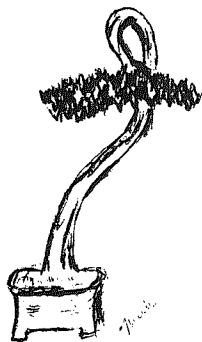
Bunjin literally translated means "literary man." A bunjin is a free spirit, not conforming to conventional rules or bounds, but finding his own form of expression. A "free spirit" style tree also refuses to conform to rules. Not for this tree is 1, 2, 3 branch placement or rule of 1/3-2/3 trunk to foliage ration, and the result can be strikingly beautiful.



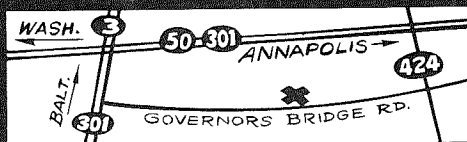
Bunjin is characterized by a long, slightly tapering trunk which may be straight or seductively curved. The foliage is near the tip of the trunk, but it may not be the apex. Instead, the apex may be a curve of the trunk and the foliage beneath it.

We've all seen bunjin in nature - a lone pine in a field looking like a forest tree which has lost its neighbors. Its trunk is long, with little taper, as if its lower branches had been shaded out by competing trees. Its foliage is near the top where it can reach the sunlight. Mature woods are full of this bunjin style, but we can't appreciate it because we can't step back and single out just one tree to look at from a distance. A bunjin can also cascade down a mountainside, weathering fierce storms and maintaining just enough foliage at its tip to stay alive. Bunjin is every style and no style.

It would seem, then, that bunjin should be the easiest style to create. Because bunjin will not conform to rules, will even drastically break them, it would seem that it should be unnecessary to learn rules at all. It would seem so, but it isn't. It is only when the bonsaiist has gone beyond learning the rules into a deeper appreciation of the meaning of these rules and the spirit of bonsai can he break away and end up with anything but, at best, a mediocre tree. A bunjin must have "gei" (another of those untranslatable Japanese words most closely approximated by the Hebrew "khain"). "Gei" is intangible, a sense of something being just right without knowing why. The bonsai artist must be able to recognize "gei" or sense how he can create it, without a set of rules to guide him. Without it bunjin is just a stick in a pot with a little foliage on it. ---Mary A. Houlton



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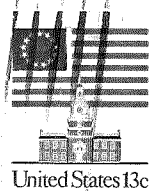
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## PBA NEWSLETTER PAGE 6

- ANNAPOLIS Mar. 11 (Friday), 7 p.m., Annapolis Public Library. Jim Newton will lecture on indoor bonsai. Nominations will be taken for new club officers. Members should bring trees for critique.
- April 12 (Tuesday), 7 p.m. Meet at the Bittersweet Nursery for a workshop on forest planting. Members should bring their own materials. Election of officers April 24 (Sunday), 10 a.m. Meet at the Annapolis Public Library for a collection trip.
- BALTIMORE Mar. 19 (Sunday), 3 p.m. Cylburn Mansion in Cylburn Park. Richard Simon will lecture on tree identification and give a slide show. Bring trees for critique.
- April 16 (Saturday), 3 p.m. Cylburn Mansion in Cylburn Park. Business meeting and election of officers.
- BROOKSIDE Mar. 26 (Saturday). This is a change from the usual third Friday. Meet at 10 a.m. in the National Arboretum for a lecture demonstration by Mr. Frank Okamura, bonsai master of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Open to all PBA members. At 1:30 p.m., a slab planting workshop for BGB members only. Limited to the first 15 BGB members who call Mary Houlton, EVP, tele. 345-3606. Slabs will be provided. Individuals provide own trees. Cost is \$10.
- April 16 (Saturday). Instead of usual Friday evening conclave meet at Sampson House (it's in Brookside Park) at 10 a.m. Jim Everman of Los Angeles will conduct a saikai workshop. Bring own trees. Containers, soil rocks and soil will be available. Class is limited to first 15 members who call Mary Houlton at 345-3606. Observers are most welcome.
- KIYOMIZU March 27 (Sunday), 2 p.m. Clearwater Nature Center. Mugo Pine Workshop by John Hinds. Details in Kiyomizu newsletter. Bring trees for critique.
- NOVABONSOC March 12 (Saturday), 10 a.m., Gulf Stream Nature Center. Nomination of officers. Preparation for Mr. Frank Okamura's workshop. Details to be sent to members prior to meeting.
- March 27 (Sunday), 9 a.m., Overlee Community Association Clubhouse, 6030 Lee Highway, Arlington. Mr. Frank Okamura will conduct a workshop. Details will be mailed to members. Bring trees for critique.
- WASHINGTON March 19 (Saturday), 2 p.m. at the National Arboretum. Program changed to a styling workshop. Details to be mailed to members. Bring trees for critique.
- April 16 (Saturday), 2 p.m. at the National Arboretum. Potting workshop. Details to be mailed to members. Bring trees for critique.
- May 21 (Saturday), 2 p.m. The March and April workshops culminate in an advanced workshop on this date.

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