Inside:

Spotlight on:
Michelle Burlitch
Lloyd Whannell
Ken Barnes

Autoclaved Aerated Cement Is Coming To Silver Falls

A Page From The Past On Jade By Bill Laprade

Camp B By Tamara Buchanan

Silver Falls

Terry’s Tips

Deborah Wilson ‘Dove of Many Moons’
Canadian Jade (Ogden deposit), 9” X 8” X 5”
Sometimes we need a nudge. I always struggle with writing this note, not because I don’t love the NWSSA, but because being put on the spot leads me to feeling slightly incompetent. It’s part of an ongoing search for a narrative to describe what it is we do, what’s important, the naming of things, description in detail, definition.

So yeah, we had a great time at Camp B. The weather was wet but spirits were not dampened. Folks connected, inspired, taught, learned, laughed, and left feeling part of a whole, and we are currently conspiring for a huge event, our 25th anniversary at Camp B next year. We had a short and very positive membership meeting, welcomed new board members, and elected new officers. Last year was about streamlining systems, hiring Renee Roberts (our new office person), and cutting costs. This year we are looking forward to increasing membership, getting the word out about our symposiums, and continuing to build our NWSSA brand. So here is my nudge to you: Come to Silver Falls, feel connected, get inspired, and talk about NWSSA to all your friends.

See you soon.

-Gerda
Sculpture NorthWest Quarterly July/August/September 2011

Artist Spotlight

Nestucca River Spirit

by Michelle Burlitch

Stone has played a large role in my life for the past 22 years, albeit not by way of sculpture. As a teenager, I learned to rock climb on the solid granite domes of Tuolumne Meadows on a family trip. Since then, I’ve been climbing all over the US and the world on all types of rocks.

Mountains, rivers and stone are integrally connected. When I picked up a hammer and chisel a year ago, I felt like I’d come home. Now when I wander the wild passages, I return to daily life at peace and enriched—and with a backpack full of rocks. The Nestucca River Spirit is the first piece I’ve completed in a series of river stone carvings.

I am a self-taught, novice stone carver, and my education would not have advanced nearly as quickly without the kind and patient guidance of NWSSA members, Joe Conrad and Bill Pickerd. I am grateful for my acquaintance with these generous mentors and with this organization.

Michelle will soon be chronicling her ongoing experiences in stone carving at her website, www.stonespiritstudio.com.
I’ve been working on several series of tall slender figures with limited edition bronze heads on various one of a kind stone bodies, and enjoying the effect of combining different materials. I’ve noticed a number of fellow sculptors combining stone with metal, glass, bronze, and wood, with wonderful results.

This last winter I started carving a piece of Texas limestone for another bronze and stone figure, only to find that the stone had a large, ugly, soft void running thru it that ruined the piece for me. I almost threw it out, but I had so much time already invested that I decided to try and save it.

Timing is the wonder of wonders. Since I was also working on some encaustic pieces for the first time, and always willing to experiment for a good cause, I tried coloring the stone with epoxy pigments thinned with denatured alcohol to cover up the ugly area. Then, I covered those areas with bee’s wax to fill the voids and mellow the colorings. A little color, a little wax, back and forth, and I had a new sculpture. I was very happy with the end results and plan to continue the experiment on other pieces.

The wax has a melting point of 140º f so it should hold up outdoors, but I’ll wait for my test pieces to go thru a full year before risking the sculpture. I like experimenting - but with a little caution on the side.

I encourage everyone to try something new. Maybe it’s been done before, maybe not, but if you haven’t done it, it’s new for you, and you never know what will happen till you try.
Happy Accident
by Ken Barnes

Clam. Not quite the one you’ll find on a beach. Liberated from a basalt end cut, $100 at Marenakos. Sat in my sketchbook for 7 years; originally an appendage of a planned bench. I have had a hundred bench ideas, a couple of them even good, but I just don’t seem to be a bench person. I sketch for them, and even buy the stone. Still, I’m benchless in Seattle.

When SouthEast Effective Development (go to: seedseattle.org) asked that I propose an installation for their Rainier Court Pocket Park I pitched a three stone grouping that fit neatly within their budget, complete with plaster maquettes. I sensed there was some play with the budget, so I also offered a photocopy of my sketchbook page, bench cut out, and suggested that if they found more money I could add the clam. Not a great sketch, but it conveyed the character. They demanded the clam, while I raised the budget. My initial blocking out was done too hastily, and I missed the curve I thought I wanted.

However, the striations along the clam body saved me, really making the curve come to life. Another Happy Accident.

I depend upon the Happy Accident in my work. Serendipity. You must have a prepared and open mind to receive the Happy Accident. In fact, on pieces where there is no Happy Accident, where the piece turns out looking exactly like my visualization, I dislike the sculpture. Not enough surprise? Not enough interplay between me and the stone? Maybe I carve stone for the resistance, and if stones give in without a fight it’s just not enough challenge? Do I dislike the outcome of my work if I have carved without a prepared and open mind?

▲ Ken Barnes tests the load bearing capability of his new 20 ton crane.

▲ ‘Clam’, part of ‘Igneous Ensemble’, Basalt, 30” high.
Autoclaved Aerated Cement Is Coming To Silver Falls

BY PENELlope CRITTENDEN

Carole Murphy, President of Pacific Northwest Sculptors, will be giving a workshop on Sculpting Autoclaved Aerated Cement at the Silver Falls Symposium Aug 27-Sept 1.

Carole was more than generous with her time on the phone telling me a little more about the medium and its potential.

Here are some of the things I learned:

Having come from a background of working with various media, including bronze, glass and poured cement, Carole was looking for a lighter medium and spent several months researching different products. She came upon Autoclaved Aerated Cement and liked it for its green qualities (it weighs about 1/5th as much as cement cutting down on transportation costs) as well as its ease of carving.

Not a new medium, having been in use in Europe as a building material since 1910, AAC is enjoying a renaissance as a sculpture medium. It responds well to hand tools of many kinds and can also be worked with powered tools, but they really aren’t necessary and there is a more intimate connection with the media without them. AAC is worked best wet as it keeps the dust down so that it can be sculpted without the use of a respirator in a well ventilated area. Several pieces can be put together with a bonding agent, creating the possibility of large sculptures. At $15 dollars for a 24” X 12” X 8” block, it is an affordable material, perfect for maquettes or finished pieces. Some blocks will be for sale at the symposium.

This light weight material in its natural form is quite porous. It can be left that way for a pumice like effect or it can be finished in a variety of ways using metalizing guns that actually spray metal onto the piece, or by using a cement slurry in various applications for a variety of textures. It can be sanded and sealed, dyed and patinized. Molds can be created from it, thereby allowing it to be cast in bronze or other materials. It is one versatile medium.

To learn more about how to work with this interesting material and have hands-on time with it, be sure to look in on Carole’s workshop at Silver Falls in September. Carole will be showing slides of her work along with some of her students’ works in a presentation in the first part of the symposium.

Contact Carole at 503-235-7233 or sculptor@carolemurphy.com

See her work on her website: www.CaroleMurphy.com

See the work of her students at: www.carolemurphy.com/studentgallery.htm

About PNWS

Pacific Northwest Sculptors is an organization comprised of sculptors of all media in the NW and those in associated fields. It puts on shows in galleries, museums and art centers and it offers workshops, lectures and art events. Meetings are held monthly in each other’s studios offering a chance to exchange ideas and brainstorm with fellow sculptors. Many times they include speakers, demonstrations, lectures and always a studio tour. Member benefits also include exhibition opportunities, exposure on the PNWS online Gallery, discounts on some sculpture supplies, a really good call to artists specific to sculptors, but most importantly the opportunity to meet with other sculptors.

Check out their website! (www.pnwsculptors.org)
The 24th NWSSA Stone Sculptor’s Symposium has come and gone. It was the 24th I have attended. 24 years of carving stone, sharing ideas, and creating friendships. Each year someone asks, “Aren’t you tired of it?” or “Don’t they become disappointing after a while?” I have often wondered about this myself. Why should I leave my well appointed studio, my organic veggie garden, my comfy bed to go to “summer camp for adults”??

In short, I believe the answer is in the connection I feel with people who love stone. These people are all different, from different backgrounds, different ages, but we share a compelling bond. This connection is magical for me. I truly don’t understand it, but I know that it feeds my creative work, my artist soul.

David Edwards could be asking Tracy Powell if it looks like the drawing yet.

Since so much of what this symposium is about has to do with people and what they share, I was delighted to be with old friends, young friends, long-time friends, friends new to me. There were people I love, people I respect, people I admire. To be surrounded by such people while within the isolating cocoon of respirator, ear protection, goggles, and work tent filled me with content.

This year the field again buzzed with the sounds of hand chisels, angle grinders, die grinders, air hammers. Diamonds seem to be everyone’s best friend. Being created were birds (a dove, penguins, a raptor), a tree with wings, human torsos of all shapes, and numerous curves, swoops, and angles. Stones being worked were marble, alabaster, limestone, basalt and others for which spelling eludes me.
As usual, we partied – at least a bit. The campfire was going most nights. The tenter’s camp was solace for those wanting to connect with the outdoors. The famous auction, where we buy each other’s stuff, was again a huge success with the proceeds going to support the scholarship fund. These things, along with the Friday night dance/party, got us all shaking our sore muscles, which of course, provided opportunities for more talking.

Nature gave us sun, rain, grass, mud, a full moon, and eagles overhead.

How could I not return each year? Each year has been totally different. Some years have been frenetic, some very mellow. Some years I have participated in everything, some years I felt like I mostly just breathed in the dust. But every year has filled me. I’ll be back for the fabulous 25th anniversary of our International Stone Sculptor’s Symposium next year! I hope to see you there.

Gudrun Ongman takes a cup wheel to the stone.

Irene Blomberg and Tamara Buchanan working out the details.
Ed. Note: The Stone of Heaven is one of the most revered natural substances in the world, such has been the case for centuries, particularly in Asia. What other mineral would make a Chinese emperor offer fifteen cities for a jade carving that he could hold in the palm of his hand or make Montezuma smile when he heard that the Spaniard Cortez was interested only in gold, since Montezuma’s most precious possession was jade.

The English word jade has a circuitous derivation. It started with the Spanish expression “piedra de hijada”, meaning the “stone of the loins”, because it was claimed that this stone could cure diseases of the kidneys. This gave rise to the word nephrite, from the Greek word for kidneys: nephros. The French equivalent l’ejade eventually evolved into le jade, and its English translation, jade.

Jade is actually two minerals: nephrite and jadeite. Nephrite is the ancient stone, a Calcium magnesium silicate: Ca2 Mg5 Si8 O22 (OH)2. Jadeite is the upstart of the two, having been discovered only 200 years ago, it is a sodium aluminum silicate: Na Al Si2 O8. Both are insoluble in acids.

Nephrite is a tough, compact variety of tremolite and actinolite (amphiboles) with a specific gravity of 3.0 to 3.3, and a hardness ranging from 5 to 6 on the Mohs Hardness Scale. It is considered to be the world’s toughest stone. Although it is not as hard as jadeite, it is much harder to break than its cousin. The reason for this is the filament-like crystalline structure of the mineral. When polished, nephrite has a soapy or oily luster. It is commonly referred to as “mutton-fat” jade, because of the marbled appearance that resembles animal fat. Nephrite is normally associated with serpentine, hornblende gneiss, and schist.

Jadeite is a hard, brittle mineral with a 3.3 to 3.5 specific gravity and a hardness of 6.5 to 7. It is pyroxenes, whose crystals are shorter and granular, and are more closely interlocked, as in a mosaic. Although it is harder than nephrite it fractures more easily. When polished, jadeite is vitreous or...
Geology

Jadeite and nephrite are minerals formed in a metamorphic environment associated with high pressure and a low temperature. While there are as many as seven hypotheses to explain the formation of the jade minerals, the most plausible is that they form under anomalously high water pressures on the lower plate of a low-angle thrust fault. In these circumstances, the fluid pressures may exceed the pressure of the rock overburden.

Such conditions may occur at the margins of the earth’s plates, such as in the Alps, California, the northwest North American coast, and the Asian part of the Pacific Rim.

For twenty centuries, the main source of jade was the nephrite from China, found primarily as cobbles and boulders in the rivers and creeks. The river stones have a tough oxidized rind, making them not easily distinguishable from other stones. The Khotan and Yarkand regions, once the prime providers, are reportedly mined out of nephrite now, and nephrite boulders are only occasionally encountered.

In 1784, jadeite was discovered in northern Burma. Originally, it was also in the form of river cobbles and boulders. However, eventually the mother lode was found and mined. Although Burmese jade is not a large part of the international jade market because of political conditions there, these mines are still in operation. Jadeite was also located in China’s Yunnan Province. Pre-Columbian implements and works of art in jadeite are thought to have originated in Guatemala.

Around the world, other sources of nephrite are: Lake Baikal, Russia; New Zealand; Switzerland; Zaire; Jordanow Slalk, Poland; British Columbia, Canada; Kotzebue, Alaska; Lander, Wyoming; and San Benito, California. Northern British Columbia now has the world’s largest active nephrite mine near Dease Lake. About 300 tons are exported to Asia annually, and about 7 tons are used in North America for carvings and jewelry. Jadeite comes from Japan, western California, the Celebes, New Guinea, and Guatemala.

Jade does not have any other use in the modern world, except as a precious mineral and carving medium. In ancient times, it was also used to make household implements and weapons.
Quarrying

In the old days in Asia, jade was mined by building a charcoal fire near the mineral vein. At night, when the temperature dropped, the stone in the vein would crack. Workers would then drive stakes into the cracks to keep it open. Holes were drilled into the cracks, which were then filled with water so the freezing water would further expand the crack, eventually breaking a block free.

Modern methods are not entirely different. Drilling and blasting, along with heavy machinery, are used to remove the overburden of soil and rock. In British Columbia, large blocks and slabs are then removed from the mountain by drilling (2-inch-diam. holes) and hydraulic splitters. Hydraulic splitters are the mechanized versions of feathers and wedges. The low-quality nephrite is then separated from the high-quality with a 72-inch diameter saw. In general, the larger blocks are 5 to 10 tons, but the largest for a special carving was 25 tons. Cobbles and boulders are still used when found, but they are a minute proportion of the yield compared to years past.

Working Jade

Jade is too hard to carve with conventional stone carving tools such as hammer and chisels. It is worked by grinding or abrading the stone away. From ancient times to only a few decades ago, jade was shaped by using hand-dipped quartz abrasives, along with hand tools, foot treadle machines, and bow drills. Presently, cutting and shaping of the stone is accomplished with diamond saws, drills, and grinding wheels.

Although tungsten carbide tools can be used with jade, the most cost effective are diamond tools. Diamonds can be used on all of the tools described, including the tiny bits that fit on the Foredom machine. The diamond sintered points with seven different grits can get into the smallest nooks and crannies. Sanding is normally accomplished with diamond compound that can be obtained in a lapidary shop. Deborah Wilson’s secret polishing compound recipe contains diamond powder, vaseline, and lipstick (for tracking where you have polished). A water bath is used during grinding and polishing. The diamond polishing compound however, is only used dry.

Flaws

When selecting jade, it is best to have two sawn sides to view. Early October is the best time of the year to obtain good pieces of the stone, because the best pieces of jade are still available soon after the summer quarrying season. White streaks in the otherwise green stone can be softer zones that may not work consistently with the rest of the stone.

Some of the inclusions that may be harder than the rest of the stone are blue-gray streaks, garnets, and flecks of chromite. Chromite inclusions in the finished piece have appeal to North Americans, but not the Chinese, who prefer pure colors.

Safety

Because jade contains silica in both minerals and nephrite is comprised of actinolite and tremolite, it is important to maintain a constant stream of water on the stone during grinding and to wear a respirator with very fine dust filters. And don’t forget about eye protection.

Appreciations

Thanks to artist Deborah Wilson of Vernon, British Columbia for sharing her jade carving experiences and thanks also to quarry operator and jade merchant Kirk Makepeace of Jade West in White Rock, British Columbia for information on quarrying and availability of jade.
17th Annual Silver Falls Stone Carving Symposium
Aug. 27th - Sept. 1st
Silver Falls State Park, Oregon

William Pickerd
Lathe Powered Alabaster Sculpture
Drawing from years of experience teaching furniture making and design, Bill has created a successful encore career as a stone turner/sculptor. Bill uses hand tools and a lathe to create translucent, hardwood rimmed vessel shapes from a solid alabaster block.

John Fisher, Guest Artist
Direct Profile Carving and Life Drawing
Internationally recognized for his on-site creation of large-scale public art and for his marble figurative carving, John is a proponent of the direct carving method and of profile carving.

Carole Murphy
Sculpting Autoclaved Aerated Cement
While initially working in clay, wax cast to bronze and glass, Carole discovered freedom of form and process through sculpting Autoclaved Aerated Cement (AAC). Carole will present her work in AAC and offer participants a guided hands-on opportunity to work with the medium.

Devin Laurence Field, Slideshow Presenter
Lee C. Imonen, Slideshow Presenter/Field Instructor
Laura Alpert, Field Instructor
Paul Buckner, Field Instructor
Richard Hestekind, Field Instructor

Tom Urban and Dan Michaels
Tool Talk
Tom and Dan will help you to carve more efficiently and safely as they keep you up-to-date on the latest carving tools.
There are lots of types, sizes, colors, and opinions. Some people like to throw them: at birds, cats, skip them across ponds, or just collect them.

We sculptors impose additional machinations on them to make them our own. We can make them into human figures (full/partial, posed/abstract or clad/nude). Or just their parts: faces: full, partial, masks, or just eyes; hands, arms, legs.

I like holes in my rocks: round ones, ovals, open, shaped and curved. Maybe with just a hint of a depression or dimple.

Polishing can be excruciating! Try texturing with score lines and chisel marks, or leave some natural surface.

A bas relief technique on a 3D piece can have tentacles, leaves, and vines going every which way. Spirals, scallops, and bumps add texture and patterns.

Multi-piece creations can increase the size and options for color and shapes. Self-based sculptures can save the cost and effort of pinning to a separate base.

Slices can be spaced apart with another material or different stone and pinned or glued into a stack or rainbow.

Inlays and overlays using gold, aluminum, and copper foils, tinted epoxies (oil-based washes for porous stone) or aluminum and copper wire can be used for special effects.

As for possibilities for those smaller scraps that are too good to throw out, there are a lot. Drill a hole, polish a side or two, and insert a tea light, or a candle(s). Or drill it deeper for a vase.

A bowl shape can be the collector of coins or keys. These smaller creations that serve a non-art purpose can be less involved from the finishing standpoint. And, of course, you have your own favorite concepts.

---

**Terry's Tips**

**What to do with Rocks?**

---

**Silver Falls**
August 27 - September 1, 2011
Silver Falls State Park, OR

**Camp Brotherhood 2012**
To Be Announced
Mt Vernon, WA

---

**Personal Stonecarving Retreats**
Power Tool & Handcarving Instruction
Individual or small group rates
Stay onsite in our Fox Hollow Valley B&B; private bath & entrance, full kitchen, 2 daily meals included, specializing in local and organically grown ingredients.

**Call or email for rates and more information**
Mark Andrew Sculpture Studio
Fox Hollow Valley B&B
29775 Fox Hollow Road, Eugene OR 97405
541.343.1557
www.markandrewstudio.com
Thank you, Pat and Karen for helping to sponsor John Fisher’s first-time attendance at Silver Falls last year. Your continuing generosity is appreciated.

And, in addition, Pat and Karen are continuing their discounts on purchases by NWSSA members. All stone is 25% off unless it’s a special or a grab bag. 10% will be taken off of imported, Italian tools (Cuturi and Milani). All other tools are 20% off. You must note in the comment section that you are a member or call in your order at: 707-869-1666 or 707-869-1021.

Info@stonesculptorssupplies.com

**CHISELS FOR SALE**

I recently acquired 125, or so, stone chisels from a Southern California Sculptor’s estate. They are all steel, come in many sizes, and include points, flats and rakes. Average price is $5.

Call Tom Urban’s cell
541-912-2197

In 1632 Gian Lorenzo Bernini received a commission to sculpt a likeness of his patron Cardinal Borghese, the rich and powerful nephew of Pope Paul V. When it was all but finished, a crack was discovered running across the forehead. The unveiling being only days away, and not wanting to give the cardinal a cracked bust, Bernini carved another one in the few days remaining, presenting them both to the Cardinal.

Both busts can be seen in the Galleria Borghese in Rome.
Piazzale del Museo Borghese 5, 00197 ROMA
Tel. 0039 06 8413979
Ticket reservation needed
Tel. 0039 06 32810
Open times:
Monday: closed
from Tuesday to Sunday: from 8.30 a.m. to 7.30 p.m.
Closed the 1st of January, 25th of December