Saikei International

The Magazine of the International Saikei Association

ISSUE 52

MONTH February 2013

CRYPTOMERIA SPECIAL

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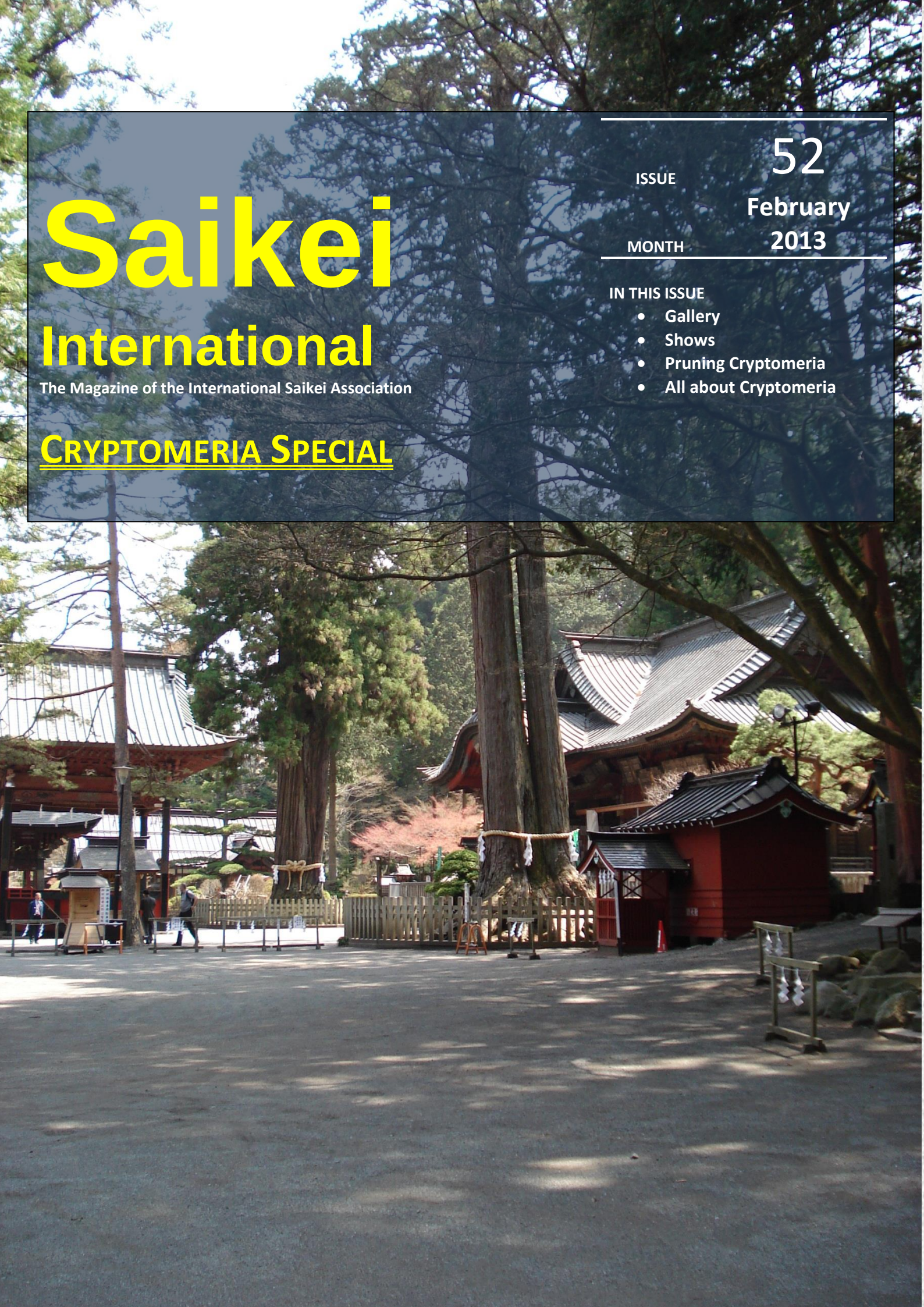

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General News

Board Meeting

We have set a date for a board meeting on the 24th of March 2013. So if you have anything you would like to raise please contact David Penny david.penny@saikei.co.uk

Currently the agenda is as follows:

1. Minutes of last meeting.
2. Progress of actions from last meeting.
3. Membership report.
4. Financial report.
5. Membership development and fees.
    - International membership development
    - Local representative responsibilities
    - Membership benefits
    - Membership fees
6. Events and shows.
7. Action plan for 2013-15
8. AOB

Website

The website is developing at a steady pace. We would be delighted to receive any information on events, etc… from around the world.

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SHOWS

If you are aware of any shows concerning Bonsai and Saikei we will be delighted to hear about these and we will of course put them in the magazine so that all members are aware. In order to enter an event we only need to know the name of the event, where it will take place, dates and times and contact for further information.

Eastbourne and Wealden Bonsai Club Annual Show 2013

Stone Cross Hall, Stone Cross, Eastbourne.
22nd of June 2013
Bonsai, Saikei, Bonsai Related Items for Sale, etc…

Your Event Name Here

Where
When
Description

Your Event Name Here

Where
When
Description

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BACK TO BASICS CRYPTOMERIA

In this issue we will be looking at Cryptomeria which is probably the most used species for Saikei. so lets start by understanding a bit about Cryptomeria as a species.

CRYPTOMERIA

Cryptomeria is a monotypic genus of conifer in the cypress family Cupressaceae formerly belonging to the family Taxodiaceae; it includes only one species, Cryptomeria japonica (syn.: Cupressus japonica L.f.). It is endemic to Japan, where it is known as Sugi (Japanese: ?). the tree is often called Japanese Cedar in English, though the tree is not related to the cedars (Cedrus). In Darjeeling district and Sikkim in India, where it is one of the most widely growing trees, Cryptomeria japonica is called Dhuppi and is favoured for its light wood, extensively used in house building.

DESCRIPTION

It is a very large evergreen tree, reaching up to 70 m (230 ft) tall and 4 m (13 ft) trunk diameter, with red-brown bark which peels in vertical strips. The leaves are arranged spirally, needle-like, 0.5-1 cm (0.20-0.39 in) long; and the seed cones globular, 1-2 cm (0.39-0.79 in) diameter with about 20-40 scales. It is superficially similar to the related Giant Sequoia (Sequoiadendron giganteum), from which it can be differentiated by the longer leaves (under 0.5 cm in the Giant Sequoia) and smaller cones (4-6 cm in the Giant Sequoia), and the harder bark on the trunk (thick, soft and spongy in Giant Sequoia).

Sugi (and Hinoki) pollen is a major cause of hay fever in Japan.

Sugi has been so long-cultivated in China that it is thought by some to be native there. Forms selected for ornament and timber production long ago in China have been described as a distinct variety Cryptomeria japonica var. sinensis (or even a distinct species, Cryptomeria fortunei), but they do not differ from the full range of variation found in the wild in Japan, and there is no definite evidence the species ever occurred wild in China.

SYMBOLISM AND USES

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Sugi is the national tree of Japan, commonly planted around temples and shrines, with many hugely impressive trees planted centuries ago. Sargent (1894; The Forest Flora of Japan) recorded the instance of a daimyo (feudal lord) who was too poor to donate a stone lantern at the funeral of the Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616) at Nikko Tosho-gu, but requested instead to be allowed to plant an avenue of Sugi, "that future visitors might be protected from the heat of the sun". The offer was accepted; the avenue, which still exists, is over 65 km (40 miles) long, and "has not its equal in stately grandeur".

It is also extensively used in forestry plantations in Japan, China and the Azores islands, and is widely cultivated as an ornamental tree in other temperate areas, including Britain, Europe, North America and eastern Himalaya regions of Nepal and India.

One very popular ornamental form is the cultivar "Elegans", which is notable for retaining juvenile foliage throughout its life, instead of developing normal adult foliage when one year old. It makes a small, shrubby 5-10m tall. There are numerous dwarf cultivars that are widely used in rock gardens and for bonsai, including 'tansu', 'koshyi', 'little diamond', 'yokohama' and 'kilmacurragh.'

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The wood is scented, reddish-pink in colour, lightweight but strong, waterproof and resistant to decay. It is favoured in Japan for all types of construction work as well as interior panelling, etc.

PROPAGATION

Seeds are planted as soon as they have been gathered in a peat sand mixture under glass. They do not germinate reliably it is better to propagate by different method.

BY LAYERING

Choose a low branch; strip the part to be buried of its needles make two or 3 cuts into the branch to encourage rooting. Bury the branch leaving the tip protruding with its needles still on, keep the soil moist, when you see new growth the roots have formed. The best time of year to conduct layering is in spring using a mixture of peat and sand in a growing pot.

BY GRAFTING

This is more a method for professionals but can be done in March in a greenhouse if possible.

FROM NURSERY STOCK

Pick a tree with an interesting trunk and a lot of branches.

CARE

Put the Cryptomeria in a slightly shaded position as it is not happy in full sun in summer. The Cryptomeria needles turn brown in winter and revert to their green colour in spring, if the tree is protected from the winters cold frosts it can keep its colour year round but it can be affected by late frost in spring, so watch out.

The Cryptomeria needs a humid atmosphere and a change of air but should be shielded from strong winds especially young or recently repotted specimens.

The Cryptomeria grows best in deep cool well-drained soil. Select a simple deep bowl in a neutral brown or willow green in colour and ensure the drainage is good.

In dry areas the Cryptomeria loses more needles. Pick with the needles off the tree and soil, cut out deadwood and keep the inside of the tree clean to guard against any problems. The old needles will fall after four or five years and this is how the branches are formed.

The Cryptomeria is slow growing and in the growing season puts out a lot of new shoots. Every 3 to 5 years repot in the spring when growth is underway, you should not repot too early in the spring. The soil mix that we suggest is a one part organic matter, one part loam, one part course sand, and one part grit. This will create a cool, rich, deep, well-drained soil.

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IN THE WORKSHOP CRYPTOMERIA PRUNING

SAIKEI TREE - CRYPTOMERIA PRUNING

In this article we will be reviewing Cryptomeria pruning, with the use of these pictures and article you should be able to understand something of the techniques required to successfully train Cryptomeria.

The compact habit of the small leaved Cryptomeria necessitates strong and vigilant pruning of all new growth, entangled branches and overlapping shoots. The main reason that we prune Cryptomeria in this way is to ensure that space, light and air reach areas of foliage which we wish to use within our design.

The Cryptomeria will thicken at intersections between trunks and branches and so we must ensure that unwanted branches are removed as soon as possible otherwise we may find that trunk expansion happens where we wish good taper to be achieved.

PRUNING

The best time to prune Cryptomeria is from mid-spring through to the end of summer. A word of warning do not prune Cryptomeria during the winter as the Cryptomeria is delicate after pruning and should be pampered by shielding it from intense sun and wind, misting several times a day for a few weeks after it has been worked on.

In the picture you can see a Cryptomeria photographed in the middle of May; you can clearly see the shoots that have been left unchecked until this time.

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PINCHING

I have personally found that pinching of Cryptomeria is very successful ensuring redirection of energy to inner branches that would otherwise die. I found that by using tweezers you are able to access small shoots that your fingers would be unable to distinguish from other shoots.

You must be careful when using tweezers that you don't crush the shoot but simply to gently trap it so that it can be removed without the use of scissors. In the picture you can see the use of tweezers on a shoot in mid-May having been allowed to grow unchecked until this time.

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PRUNING WITH SCISSORS

Pruning with scissors should only be conducted where small branches are required to be removed or where soft pinching is no longer viable. The scissors must be sharp to avoid crushing and separating the cambium layer from the wood. You must ensure that you do not cut through any of the other surrounding foliage, if you do you will cause browning of the foliage where it has been cut which is very unsightly. In the picture you can see the correct way to remove a length of branch.

AFTER-CARE

As previously mentioned Cryptomeria become very delicate after pruning and so therefore should be removed from direct harsh sunlight and placed in a sheltered position away from wind. I have also found it very beneficial to mist on a regular basis as this seems to dramatically improve the recovery time for the tree.

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VIEWS FROM A LENS—GALLERY

1 Tree, 3 Rocks

A natural rocky outcrop

Is it Bonsai or Saikei?

An unusual Saikei just composed

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CLUBS

Name	Telephone	Address	Day of Meeting	Website
Dai Ichi Bonsai Group (Essex)	01277 625 298	Shenfield Village Hall	1st Monday of each month call	
Eastbourne and Wealden Bonsai Club (Sussex)	01323 731 369	Hellingly Village Hall	2nd Monday of the Month	www.eandwbonsaiclub.co.uk
Eastleigh Bonsai Club (Hampshire)	01489 789 962 or 07795 187 632		2nd Monday of the Month	

If you would like to have your local club details added to this list please contact the newsletter team by e-mail newsletter@Saikei.co.uk

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www.saikei.org

Administration Offices

President: David Penny

Senior Vice President: Paul Eslinger

Vice President Membership: Brian Dale

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