

Southern California Bamboo

The newsletter of the Southern California Chapter of the American Bamboo Society.
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Fall Bamboo Sale

Past-President Dany Ramos Cisneros is searching for a location in the San Diego area where ABS-SoCal can sponsor a bamboo plant sale. The idea is to model the sale after sales ABS-SoCal used to hold at Quail Botanical Gardens where individual growers bring healthy plants and set their own prices with the Society receiving a percentage.

Bamboo of the Americas (BOTA)

One of our Board members is active in the perennial bamboo project in the Mexican state of Veracruz. Dany Ramos Cisneros is in collaboration with Eduardo Ruiz, Ximena Londoño, Gib Cooper, and others to collect and conserve Mexican bamboo species. Bamboos are not the only class of plants they are conserving. Contact BOTA if you know of other plant species in danger of extinction in that part of Mexico.

ABS National Meeting

The national meeting is to be held in Puerto Rico this coming November 1-5. Please check the national ABS website (www.bamboo.org) for registration details.

Conference Calls

The ABS-SoCal Board has held two informal conference calls since the November 2016 newsletter: November 7th and February 14th.

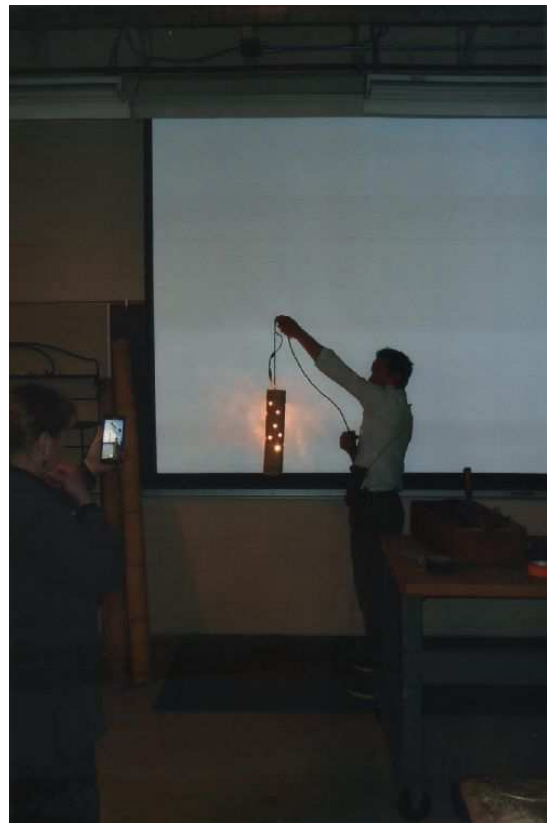


Figure 1 Gerard Minakawa showing his bamboo lamp at the Gift of Bamboo event.

Gift of Bamboo



Figure 2 President Kevin Rowell (l) and Alt. Dir. Gerard Minakawa (r)

The December 11, 2016, bamboo event was held in the Ahmanson Classroom at the Huntington Botanical Library. President Kevin Rowell gave the introduction. Gerard Minakawa was first speaker. Gerard provided us with some of his background related to his current standing in the bamboo world. His first company, UKAO, was a grass furniture business. After tiring of furniture making Gerard went to Bolivia and worked with indigenous artists in a project called “Aid to Artisans.” This was done at Lake Titicaca and involved boat making. During the slide show Gerard also showed pictures of *mudhif* reed houses from southern Iraq.



Figure 3 Presentation by Gerard Minakawa

Gerard likes to sketch using Tombo markers. He made a bamboo spearfishing gun by using bamboo, epoxy and hemp and using techniques from a bamboo bike expert. For his structures, Gerard likes the triangular columns. Sometimes his bamboo is painted with black light paint and then illuminated at night with UV lights.

Bamboo DNA is his latest company. Twelve to twenty projects are done in a typical year. Some of the slides included the “Bamboo Starscraper” at Coachella around 2012. A 120 foot long bridge was constructed at the annual Lightning in a Bottle festival in central California. “Starry Bamboo Mandala” was created for Burning Man festival in 2006.



Figure 4 Joyce Patra of 50-Fifty Asian Fusion Cuisine preparing food

About 10 years ago when his first structure was made for the Burning Man festival there were virtually no regulations. Now there is lots of oversight. Soil tests were done in San Bernardino, Calif. A pull strength of 3,000 lbs is needed for safety reasons.

Additional techniques are the use of bamboo skewers to build models. A mix of bamboo stick lashings with standard rigging keeps the structures upright. The Dance Temple at the Boom festival in Idanha-a-Velha, Portugal, is his tallest structure yet at 101 feet. Plans will change frequently too. Gerard wanted 6 sides for the Digoji Pagoda instead of 4 columns. More pagodas are planned. He has had fun making large scale arthropods out of bamboo. Collectively they are referred to as the

Bugaboo Zoo: spiders, grasshoppers, butterflies, dragonflies.



Figure 5 Joyce preparing shoot

Bamboo is imported from Indonesia and Colombia and typically is re-used in projects. It is purchased already treated with Borax. “Bamboo Gateway” was finished with dextane for the Electric Picnic festival in Ireland. Sometimes he’ll use fermented green persimmon *kaki*. *Kaki-shilu* looks clear when applied but darkens when exposed to UV light. A mineralization treatment using calcium carbonate creates a lasting bleaching effect.

Timor Black is a good bamboo in split form for weaves but cracks in low humidity. Surface checking is the term used to describe minor cracks. A trick to combat this is to harvest the bamboo at the lowest moisture content. A warehouse with controlled moisture loss will also help.



Figure 6 Curry

Paulina Hermansen followed Gerard as speaker. She started off with a tribute to Linda Garland the Bamboo Queen. Linda was born in Ireland; later in life she fell in love with Bali. A recipient of The MacArthur Award she is now unfortunately sick with various unknown problems. Among her many contributions to the world of bamboo she helped develop the vertical sap technique and diffusion system for preserving cut bamboo. She is also the President and Founder of the Environmental Bamboo Foundation based at the Panchoran Retreat which was once her home. A four-minute tribute to Linda video was shown.

Paulina then went on to present her Ecuador Project of September 2016 held at Manabi- Punta Blanca. This project was inspired by the large earthquake of April 16, 2016, which killed over 700 people. The architecture of the bamboo structure was influenced by the indigenous *Jama-Coaque* people. David Collins came down from Mexico. Darrel De Boer was not able to participate but did secure \$3000 in funding from the Northern California Chapter. Structure built was named *Balcon del Mar*. It was made of bamboo fibers called *latillas*. Workers used a model structure as a guide. Bamboo was said to be “a very noble material.”



Figure 7 Shoots at beginning of cooking

An informal Board Meeting was held just before lunch. Discussion was moderated by Kevin Rowell who spoke of getting more people, more energy,

have savings, encourage Facebook, and other social media. Lynda Brothers mentioned booths at a past



Figure 8 Shoots cooked

event at the Huntington Library encouraged more participants in ABS who didn't know about the event. Gerard added the importance of drawing new members, more bamboo content, and asked what is the incentive for companies and individuals to show up? Kiyoshi Yoshida stressed the importance of the love of bamboo. A member from the audience spoke of service and education and eco-fairs. Roy Wiersma suggested the "society" appellation means the club should be science oriented.



Figure 9 Tools

At lunch there was a demonstration on how to prepare bamboo shoots for food: longitudinal cut, peel culm leaves, 2X boiling (color of shoot pieces turn from white to "yellow"). Food was prepared by Joyce Patra of Fifty-50 Asian Fusion Cuisine.

Someone brought up that there is no building code for bamboo structures during the lunch discussion. Gerard took notes on the round table discussion of ideas to see what everyone present would like to see or do related to bamboo or have to offer in this respect. Joyce emphasized fashion, food, furniture, and fun. New member Max wants child's toys (esp. kites), etc. made from bamboo. Roy stressed methods, also would like a DVD of pictures all variants of all species. He would also promote scientific studies such as the grafting of bamboo. Field trips are also favored. Gerard came



Figure 10 Kevin demonstrating technique

up with the idea of building a bamboo tiny house and then auctioning it off. The bamboo tiny house would be mounted on a trailer and then driven around to county fairs, museums, etc. Max mentioned bamboo frames for bicycles. Brandon who works with Kevin and Gerard talked about the compression and tension qualities of bamboo as well as lashing and knots. Max told of bamboo filament for 3-D printers. Lynda and Max said that bamboo is bent by filling with sand and heating it. Paulina showed a video called "*La Casa de Cacique – Una Joya de Bambu.*"

The workshop portion was held in a different room. The headhouse was a short walk away. There Kevin gave a tool and technique demonstration. In the case of saws, for example, the cutting is almost entirely on the pull stroke. It is best to cut ½ to 3 fingers away from the node to prevent/ minimize checking. [Note from editor: Don't literally cut your fingers!]. Use a paper wrap-

around to cut straight. A tape measure will also help accomplish this – mark with a marker. Rotate



Figure 11 Cross cutting

the culm to get a good cut with no tears (“blow-outs”). There are tools for rough work and tools for fine work. A bamboo froe and plane were two of many tools used. Originally pins hand made of bamboo internodes were used in joinery. This was done by tapering and squarestocking. A step drill bit is excellent for drilling holes. The following numbered crafts were made: 1.) Lamp – toggle used as hanger, jute fiber, strip of LED lighting (7W), punch out lower node using $\frac{3}{4}$ ” chisel., 2.) Tool Carrier – made of *Guadua*, 3.) Tea Light – can add aluminum foil inside to increase reflection. Tip: no reason to cut with grain – just split. Drill two holes then punch/split out middle, 4.) Piggy Bank – normally would keep a node on each side. Mineral oil is food safe. Removal of outer skin of culm allows for staining. Tool called dremel is good for engraving. One can also do pyrography. Sanding: 100 grit to 200 grit. Shellac is natural and new layers melt older layer. Use denatured alcohol to clean up, 5.) Key Chain Ornament (this was pre-made) – 3W LED bulb (has RGV chip) fits A-120 socket with remote control, 6.) Planter- can mount to wall (pre-made), 7.) “Do-dad” – piece from bamboo spear gun project made using cup saw. Tip: use picture hangers to get crafts to hang on wall



Figure 12 Gerard and his lamp



Figure 13 More tools and techniques



Figure 14 Applying finish



Figure 15 Keychain ornament



Figure 16 Some electrical components



Figure 17 Wall hanging planter



Figure 18 Sail design



Figure 19 Bamboo used to stake the Glastonbury Thorn



Figure 20 Close-up of bamboo used to stake the Glastonbury Thorn

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Figure 21

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Note: This newsletter is available in PDF format at the ABS-SoCal Web site: www.abssocal.org – In Color!

**Application for membership in: The American Bamboo Society
and the Southern California Chapter of the American Bamboo Society**

Renewal New

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ Fax: (_____) _____ e-mail: _____

- Membership for 2017 is (check one):
- Annual: \$50- ABS and ABS SoCal Chapter (\$40 digital)
 - Annual: \$15- ABS SoCal only
 - Supporting: \$70- ABS and ABS SoCal Chapter (\$60 digital)
 - Lifetime: \$800- ABS Membership only (\$600 digital)
 - Patron: \$130- ABS and ABS SoCal Chapter (\$120 digital)
 - Lifetime: \$300- ABS SoCal Chapter only
 - \$15/year for each additional Chapter checked below:
 - Three years: \$140- ABS and ABS SoCal Chapter (\$110 digital)
 - International: \$55- ABS only (\$40 digital)
 - Florida Caribbean; Hawaii; Louisiana- Gulf Coast; Mid-States; Northeast; Northern California;
 - Pacific Northwest; Southeast; Texas Bamboo Society

Make check to ABS SoCal: Mail to: **ABS SoCal Membership, 5387 Topaz St. , Alta Loma, CA 91701**
 Check here if you do **NOT** want your phone number and e-mail address listed in directories.