



## Gresham Japanese Garden

# Tsuru Island



### Japanese Garden What is next for the Bridge

Now that the bridge construction is complete a few things still need to happen. Some will be waiting for time to pass and others we are waiting for money.

The ones that are waiting for time to pass have to do with the reaction of the wood to weather conditions and moisture. In the

The old bridge is an example of years of weather conditions and the effects on the wood. Just after the bridge was completed we put a coating of "Teak Oil" on the surface which is intended to work its way into hardwoods that are very dense. This will be done again on a

*PURPLE HEART.....Comes from Brazil and the surrounding areas. This wood is hard to find, very costly, and hard to machine. It will outlast anything else available and be maintenance free and fire proof. This wood is also used for docks and fishing boats. A Gresham company uses Purple Heart as part of the manufacturing of skate boards.*

past I have indicated that the Purple Heart wood is not affected by many things, however the understanding of the effects of temperature, moisture and most importantly how these effect expansion and contraction is important. Just because something expands or contracts does not mean that it will move the same and return the same every time, we are dealing with a natural product.

periodic basis each year in the summer so that the content of oil in the wood is maintained until it finally settles in. This oil may in some degree keep the color of the wood. As mentioned before, the wood will go gray and will remain that way through its existence. This is why continuing to use sealers to enhance the structural integrity of the wood

### NAJGA Conference



This past October I took the opportunity to attend the North American Japanese Garden Conference at Duke University. People from all over the country who work, volunteer, teach and are involved in Japanese style gardens attended. The focus was on the care of trees and shrubs that are normally used in Japanese gardens. Much of the content was based on "Lace Leaf Maples" and Japanese Black Pines. Experts from Aesthetic Pruners Association (APA) based in Oakland, CA, were on hand to demonstrate specific tools, processes and teach about plants in regard to effects of sunshine and plant energy.



is necessary.

The wood has also been laminated in much of the components of the bridge and each piece of wood will react a bit differently from the one it is connected to. Some sections will move slightly at the joint. The worst of that will be seen through the first winter. Once the movement of wood has taken place a repair will take place with epoxy and smoothing the surface to improve and/or secure the cosmetic appeal of the surface. The components that will be most affected and in need of some care are the hand rails and the finials, and possibly the

edges of some deck boards. Some areas may look like this description and have been left there deliberately so the repair can take place all at the same time.

The posts have shown some cracks from wood shrinking and splitting. This started shortly after the logs were turned at the mill and continued growing. Later in the spring or summer the voids will be filled with epoxy. The posts will also turn gray and can be coated with a wax (end sealer) to help with bugs and moisture getting beyond the surface.

During the building of the bridge many people asked me what we were going to do with the glulam's (bridge supports) in regard to color. Ron originally stained the beams with gray, to get them to be a bit more consistent with the appearance. The idea was to match the eventual fading of the rest of the bridge. Patients is the key word here. Knowing that it is always a risk to try and match colors, especially with natural materials and different woods.



## NAJGA CONFERENCE

An opportunity! Durham NC cont.

The Sarah Duke garden was the home base of the event with wonderful facilities and a 30 acre setting of a variety of gardens including Italianate, Discovery gardens, Asiatic gardens, Native plants garden and many more. 50% of the funding for the garden comes from Duke University and the balance comes from donations, grants, endowments and public use of the facilities.

The opening of the new Japanese garden took place during this conference. It had just been completed in the previous 30 days by Sada Uchiyama who is the curator of the Portland Japanese Garden. This 1.12 million dollar garden features a stunning water feature, grand paths, a tea house, pavilion, fencing and mature plants. Some of the plant materials I noticed were mature Japanese Palmatum that were donated by an elderly person living in the area. Also Japanese black pines (12) about 10 years old, that were aesthetically pruned, (these came from Bentwood Nursery in Boring, Oregon, dug in the month of

August, shipped in a refrigerated truck to Durham NC, and planted in September.

Dennis Makishima provided demonstrations with his team from Merrit College in California. Dennis began the aesthetic pruning and certification program at the college in the late 1970's and has seen dozens of professionals come out of the program. With that came the Aesthetic Pruners Association that establishes standard for the industry and provides membership and certification for active professionals. Dennis had spent many years studying in Japan to hone his craft that eventually went way beyond ART. After the Duke University sessions, Dennis says he is going to slow down and retire and only be involved in NAJGA programs.

The program was presented by the President of NAJGA, Dr. Kendal Brown who is a professor of Japanese Culture from Long Beach State University. For more information: [NAJGA.com](http://NAJGA.com).

## Ebetsu Sister City Tree Donation

During the time ceremony of our Tsuru Island bridge opening, we were blessed with a gift to purchase a "mountain ash" tree by the Ebetsu, Japan Sister city association counsel.

Our intention was to purchase the tree and schedule a planting ceremony to include GESCA, Mayor Bemis and the City Council. I suggested that all of this could take place in the fall.

I found a group of 7 trees to choose from that were grown locally and I chose the best of the best, as you will see later in the spring. This tree is a fine 2-inch specimen that stands about 12 feet tall.

I had three locations that I wanted to consider for planting after taking input from our volunteers. I proceeded with seeking approval for those locations from the City. My first choice was granted, which you will see in the attached photo. Please note that the tree in the photo has been replaced with the "Mountain Ash". This location combines several positives points; 1) It is an excellent visibility point and has room to grow, 2) the dedication plaque will be clearly visible, and 3) it is included with the flag display area and the garden entrance sign.

Our efforts to remove the existing tree and plant the ash were held up out of respect for the existing tree because we wanted to wait for it to be fully defoliated. As of yesterday's volunteer day we have dug and secured the moved original tree and planted the mountain ash.

We will follow up with more information and photos once the ash is leafed out.



## What's Coming Next

This is the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the newsletter. In the future we are hoping to provide a newsletter quarterly and in time we may increase to monthly. The newsletter will be distributed to those volunteers that are on Wendy Coffin's roster.

We are in hope that volunteers will offer information and articles to be included in the newsletter so it becomes a group effort. The newsletter will be distributed on "Facebook" and the Gresham Ebetsu Sister City website. All newsletters will be archived on that site.

### HELPFUL HINTS FOR PLANTS AND FLOWERS

- A good tonic for ferns is to water them once a week with a weak tea
- Feeding ferns – a weak solution of ammonia is good because of the nitrogen content.
- Salted boiling water will kill grass or weeds growing between sections of cement or rock walkway.
- Cut flowers will last longer – remove leaves below the waterline.
- Very hot water will revive wilted flowers
- Coffee grounds for feeding geraniums.
- Lengthen the lives of fresh cut flowers, - 2 tbs of white vinegar and 2 tbs of cane sugar in a quart of water. Vinegar inhibits the growth of organisms and sugar serves as food.
- Plagued with rabbits, try powdering your plants with the cheapest brand of talcum powder, dust a little on or around the plants, it works like a charm in repelling flea beetles, and rabbits on tomatoes, potatoes, peppers and other plants. When rain washes it away, apply more.