2016-09-26

Shibui Bonsai Kai

Erich Walter

Committee Member – BRAT Representative

To: Willem Pretorius – President of SABA

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RE: - SABA Life Time Award Nomination
 Derry Ralph - Founder member of Shibui Bonsai Kai

Shibui is proud to nominate Derry Ralf for the SABA Life time Award. Together with Alf Jones and Eddie van der Westhuizen Derry founded Shibui in 1981 and was chairman of the club for many years. Derry's enthusiasm, boundless energy and dedication to Shibui and bonsai as a whole continues to this day. He was instrumental in introducing a booklet "Bonsai for Beginners", that is still used by many clubs today. He was the first to introduce “Annual Theme Symposia” and to hold an International Bonsai Convention in South Africa in 1984 the theme "Beauty and Harmony" with John Naka and Shigeo Kato as headliners.

Derry also played a major role in the formation of the Bonsai Regional Association of Transvaal (BRAT). In the mid 1980's he was approached by John Naka to be the Africa representative of the, then newly created Wold Bonsai Friendship Federation (WBFF) to promote friendship and exchange between bonsai associations throughout the world. At great financial expense to himself Derry accepted and Africa was accepted as a member of
WBFF at the First World Bonsai Convention in Omiya, Japan in 1989. For 10 years he was an active member of Bonsai Clubs International (BCI), served on the board for two periods and also demonstrated for them at the New Orleans BCI Convention in 1985. He still maintains regular contact with the Japanese Embassy and other Japanese cultural organizations. His love for plants is further exemplified in his 25 year creative participation in Ikebana.

In 1997 Derry received the John Naka Meritorious Service Award - for his contribution in promoting bonsai locally and internationally. In more recent times, one of the aims of the Shibui founders was completed by Derry, that being the establishment of a site for the heritage collection. This dream was fulfilled in October 2010 when the Shibui Heritage Collection, at the Oppenheimer's Brenthurst residence in Parktown, Johannesburg, was established.
In April 2013 Derry received the Order of the Rising Sun - gold and silver rays by Japan for his contribution in promoting Japanese culture through bonsai, ikebana and other related activities.

Shibui request that the SABA committee favourably consider this nomination.

Well done Derry we are proud of you and may your achievements in bonsai be
remembered for a long time.

Kind Regards

Erich Walter