

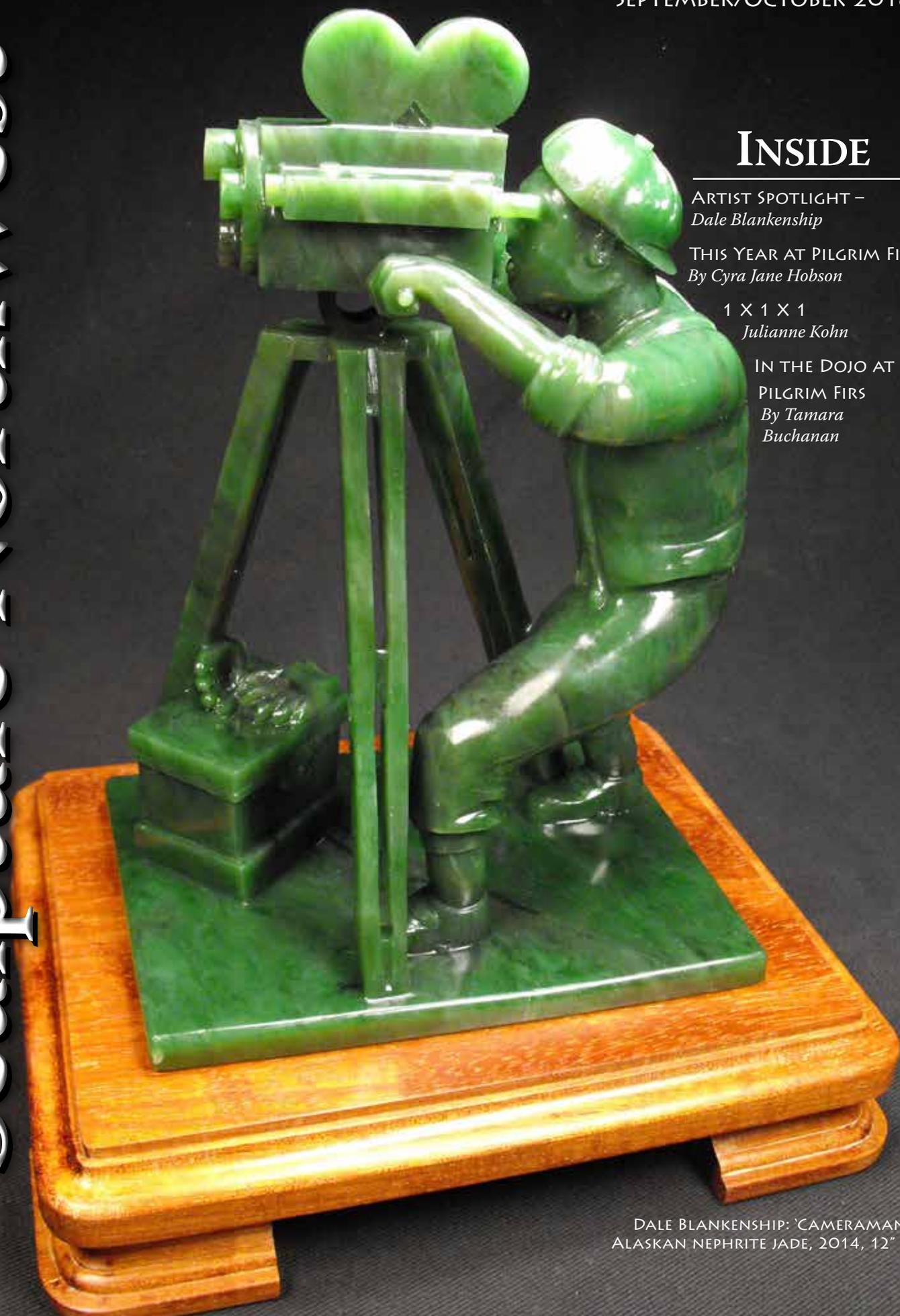
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By Cyra Jane Hobson

1 X 1 X 1
Julianne Kohn

IN THE DOJO AT
PILGRIM FIRS
*By Tamara
Buchanan*



DALE BLANKENSHIP: 'CAMERAMAN',
ALASKAN NEPHRITE JADE, 2014, 12" H

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FROM THE EDITORS...

We all wait for summer, and even though this one came with higher temperatures than we're used to, it was wonderful to be able to get out and carve. It helps if you have shade or are carving with water. Fortunately for Dale Blankenship, all of his jade carving requires water.

If you've not seen Dale's work, you are in for a real treat. He tells us in this issue just how he goes about carving his jade wonders. Look, read and be amazed.

When you read this, our two symposiums will be over for this year. But, if you missed Pilgrim Firs, Cyra Jane Hobson, director for this year's hullabaloo, gives us a recap about some of the delightful things that happened there.

This issue introduces a new feature, 1 x 1 x 1: One Artist, One Piece, One Page. This column will be featuring artists who may or may not have a large body of work, but who have one piece they would like to feature. They send us a photo of the piece, a photo of themselves and short answers to five questions and voilà: 1 x 1 x 1. To kick off this feature, Julianne Kohn shares her jade octopus pendant and five short facts about it.



We finish up this issue with Tamara Buchanan explaining the Japanese word Dojo and how it was applied to what we used to call the beginner's tent at Pilgrim Firs.

If you like the color in this issue, keep in mind that anyone can have their work in color in the Journal for \$75 a page. The color cover is free.

Stay strong, carve stone and keep hydrated.

... Lane and Penelope

Editors' note: In the spirit of connection, and because our 2018 Symposiums are over and there is not as much opportunity to get together during the rest of the year, we'd like to use the Journal to introduce ourselves to each other. Each issue will have a photograph of one or two newer members and how they heard about the North West Stone Sculptors Association (NWSSA.) We begin the new "Let's Meet...." feature with Jeremy Kester.

LET'S MEET ... JEREMY KESTER



How did you hear about NWSSA?

In 2012 "The Body Beautiful" Greek and Roman sculpture exhibition came to the Portland Art Museum. There I met MJ Anderson. She was set up displaying the steps and tooling of marble sculpture. Unaccustomed to encountering a stone sculptor in the wild, I was full of questions. After a great conversation she wrote down the NWSSA web address on a flyer. It took me 4 years to actually make it to my first Symposium at Camp Brotherhood in 2016 where my experiences were course correcting. I have been coming back ever since.

... Jeremy Kester

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: DALE BLANKENSHIP



These 73-year-old hands have been carving jade for nearly forty of those years. Nary a penny earned for the effort. Several reasons for that. Mainly the ample financial rewards earned by these hands working on

telecommunication electronics and main frame computers dissuaded any thoughts of pursuing a life of starving artist. The attached ten digits remain busy in these twelve years of retirement but as yet still monetarily uncompensated. Though a price was incurred in those forty years. Fortunately that matter was resolved satisfactorily the past year by carpal tunnel release surgery on both wrists.

Lacking formal art instruction and without mentored guidance in the ways of lapidary these hands underwent a hit and miss sort of education in glyptic sculpture. That would be



▲ 'BLUE OCTOPUS'
AFGHANISTAN LAPIS LAZULI
CHATOYANT TIGER'S-EYE
1984
4"W X 3" H

with emphasis on the 'miss'. Somehow, eventually, the corresponding two feet managed to secure a solid footing on this business and forward momentum was achieved.

In the early years there was experimentation with any number of gemstone materials. Mostly of the cryptocrystalline quartz varieties. But one day these eyes set upon this unfamiliar green block of stone called jade. Things have never been the same since. Partly owing to acquired skills but appreciably owing to a stone obligingly compliant to often unreasonable expectations this chap in a younger shop apron was catapulted from beginner carver to awarded master in record time. So began a decades long love affair with jade.

For benefit of the readership it must be pointed out that there are two stones chemically and mineralogically different that legitimately are referred to as 'jade'. It is a bit of unfortunate circumstances going back some two hundred fifty years why this is so. A mineralogist in 1866 realized the duplicity and attempted to correct the matter by calling one jadeite and the other nephrite. Helpful as the distinction was the subsequent one hundred fifty years have failed to eliminate the confusion factor for the general public. Two stones continue as one name. It



▲ 'SATURDAY MORNING CARTOONS'
BOTH CHILDREN - BRITISH COLUMBIA NEPHRITE JADE
ANTENNA BASE - WYOMING NEPHRITE JADE
TELEVISION CABINET - WYOMING NEPHRITE JADE
TELEVISION SPEAKER COVER - AUSTRALIAN NEPHRITE JADE
TELEVISION SCREEN - SIBERIAN NEPHRITE JADE
2017
TV 4.5" H



▲ 'GRIEF'
ARKANSAS CRYSTAL QUARTZ
1984
5" H

is nephrite exclusively that enter and leave this carver's workshop.

What makes nephrite jade such an ideal medium for the gemstone carver is its physical structure. Nephrite is a rock made up of a variable but somewhat consistent conglomeration of minerals of a specific mineralogical group. The primary mineral constituents initially were fibrous and parallel. During the subterranean metamorphic process of heat and pressure the fibers became distorted, compressed and cohesive. Mineralogists refer to this interlocking distortion as 'felting'. The result after baking in earth's oven and left to cool on the window sill is an especially tough substance that resists deformation. Nephrite, but with one minor exception, is in fact the toughest natural material on this planet. Jadeite comes in second at about half toughness and for a different structural reason. The Mohs hardness of nephrite ranges from 6 to 6 ½. But nephrite is many, many, many times tougher than diamond with its hardness of 10. For the carver this toughness lends to jade's ability to hold up to especially fine and intricate details.

The carvings Grief and Blue Octopus were a temporary hiatus from jade during an early interval of depleted personal

jade inventory. Grief was carved from a single Arkansas quartz crystal. Although a good carving material in its own right its appeal did not surpass that of nephrite. The entire carving is of a frosted surface but for the two polished tears streaming down the woman's cheeks. The intent of the carving was to project to the viewer raw emotion. Although that effect seems to have been achieved well enough, the subject is a bit macabre. No other attempt along such a theme has been made since.

It so happened during the hiatus that a nearly forty pound available piece of especially fine and highly desirable Wyoming jade was brought to this jade nut's attention. At any other time the purchase of such a superb homogenous colored rock would not have just severely impacted the family budget but would have outright destroyed it. But at that time my particular telecommunication skills were in high demand. The overtime was brutal. The resultant paychecks were obscenely swollen. The jade acquisition became a done deal. Had my personal clairvoyant-on-retainer not been out sick on that day there would have been a second mortgage taken on the house to buy more chunks from the original 860 pound boulder. Opportunities for Wyoming "apple green" are



▲ 'JUST A TRIM'
WYOMING NEPHRITE JADE
2012
6" H

Continued on page 8 ►

THIS YEAR AT CAMP PILGRIM FIRS

Our second year at Pilgrim Firs Camp in Port Orchard reaffirmed that the July symposium has found a great home for our group and our spirit. As intense as last year was, this year was just as relaxed. The entire event went so smoothly thanks to the combined efforts and positivity of so many of the over 100 attendees and the fantastic staff of the venue. The guest artists this year, Candyce Garrett and Chris Pellettieri were both spectacular teachers and inspiring artists. Candyce works in large granite and basalt at her home in New Mexico and spent the week splitting and pinning a large granite triangle and demonstrating a variety of surfacing techniques. Chris has spent the last 25 years carving limestone in a large warehouse in the midst of Manhattan; his week was focused on a limestone figure carving, hand tooling demos, and working with veterans from the JBLM (Joint Base Lewis-McChord) located just nine miles south-southwest of Tacoma).

This was the first time we coordinated with the JBLM to bring veterans to the symposium for a few days so they

could experience the healing and meditational aspects of our craft. Rick Johnson was instrumental in sparking off the collaboration between our groups, and Dan Michael came up to give focused instruction. We also rolled out a new pinning and sleeving station this year – Pat Barton and Dan Colvin both built some sturdy tables for the core drills and during the afternoons Dan and dedicated work study folk helped pin a wide variety of sculptures and bases.

Speaking of work study folks, we had a grand total of sixteen work studies and three scholarships funded from the auctions last year – what a fantastic crowd of enthusiastic, hardworking people! The auctions this year, coordinated by Monika Hawkinson, raised over \$14,500 so we can do that again next year! For the stone auction, we had a bunch of cut-offs from Will Robinson and a generous lot of stones and tools from Arliss Newcomb. Additionally, Gus Schairer brought a table-full of donated power tools and accessories, some for the Dojo and some for the auction. The Dojo, by the way, is our new name



◀ KENTARO KOJIMA DEMONSTRATES THE JUMPING WEDGE SPLITTING TECHNIQUE.

JEREMY KESTER IN ► FRONT OF HIS MOST RECENT SCULPTURE.



for the Beginner's Tent, as it is far more apt for what that space provides to the symposium. Tamara Buchanan and Grant Bowman set up a Tool Room there this year to better manage the growing selection of tools that are available for newcomers and seasoned carvers alike.

This year I got to experience the jade tent for the first time, and was so impressed by the hard work of Deborah Wilson, Steve Sandry, and Julianne Kohn in keeping that area running and sharing their knowledge with everyone working there. Deborah and Dale Blankenship both shared slideshows of their work in jade during the week, as did Tom Small of his most recent work in glass and stone mixed media. Our scholarship exchange student from the California Sculptors Symposium, Karen Cope-Swatton and Ben Mefford, who attended CSS as our exchange this year, gave a presentation on that symposium and her innovative figurative work. And then we had a rousing geology lecture by Trevor Contreras and Michael Yeaman gave an overview presentation of the "Elements of Sculpture" book as featured in a weekend intensive on Orcas Island earlier this year.

Of course, then we have the huge contributions from our symposium staff. Pat Barton and Renee Roberts each put in so much time and effort in making Camp a great experience for everyone. Pat's contributions to the field (and the auction this year via the Pat Barton Fanclub Coffee Mugs courtesy of John Lafortune and Therese Kingsbury) are integral to the success of this event. Renee puts in so much work as registrar, keeping track of hundreds of threads to pull together, and with Barbara Davidson on her team, they keep all the registrations and financials running smoothly. John Lafortune as the announcer/emcee is spot on. I love working with these people and am so happy you all allow me to do this job!

We all had such a wonderful time carving, learning, communing, laughing, swimming, dancing, carving some more, and then carving again. I'm already looking forward to 2019.

*Cyra Jane Hobson
Symposium Director*



◀ CRAIG BREITBACH, DAN COLVIN, AND BEN KIMURA HELP CANDYCE GARRETT WITH CORE DRILLING HER GRANITE PIECE.

STEVE SANDRY AND ▶ LISA SVIRCIC WORKING ON BASES.



ARTIST SPOTLIGHT *continued from page 5*

increasingly rarer with an inversely proportional increasing price. Current four figure prices per pound not including the decimal are outright scary. The carvings *Just a Trim* and *Mother's Board Meeting* were made from the purchased piece.

An early path was set toward carving thematic nursery rhymes and fables. But it was learned that such a theme artistically tends toward banality. Perhaps not in jade but certainly in other mediums. The pursuit of avant-garde artistic uniqueness is an elusive one. Whatever one does almost invariably someone else somewhere has done it before. Nonetheless there are artists seeking the less repetitious who wander about on less trodden paths. The path most often chosen by this artist is that of narrative sculpture. Captures of moments in time of otherwise unremarkable pedestrian



▲ 'MOTHER'S BOARD MEETING'
WYOMING NEPHRITE JADE
2007
5" H

events. The attempt always is to portray verbs as opposed to nouns. For some yet undiagnosed reason the artistry portion of this brain's dopamine receptors fail at abstract and organic forms.

Because of nephrite's toughness but not so much its hardness the usual stone sculpting methods are ineffectual. Single-



▲ 'WILD RIDE'
WYOMING NEPHRITE JADE
2018
5" L X 3" H

mindedly beat on a chunk of nephrite with mallet and chisel and one will miss every call to lunch and dinner for the next decade. Nephrite's toughness is why aboriginal cultures used the stone for hammers, adzes and anvils. But it is tractable to abrasion. The jade cultures of yore used the much harder quartz, emery and corundum sands to fashion implements and amulets. Today, of course, manufactured diamond grits are the preferred choice for cutting and shaping.

This carver's workshop is fairly well equipped with a myriad assortment of tools. Most of which are motorized. Many of which are self-made. There are several saws with diamond impregnated rims ranging from 8" diameter to 18". The saws are the heavy hitters early on in a carving project. Grinding is such a slow tedious chore that one wants to cut off as much waste material as possible. The word 'waste' used rather liberally as most trimmed pieces become candidates for later smaller projects. The saw cuts may be performed on a lapidary trim saw or for larger projects a pivoting drop saw. An arbor mounted diamond grinding wheel comes into play following the saw work. Smaller diamond grinding wheels are used next if appropriate. Then comes the detailed grinding. Small diamond burrs mounted on some variation of a bench arbor might perform much of the shaping. Or else a motor-driven flexible shaft with hand piece and small burrs will consume a significant proportion of the project

interval. Lastly comes the tedious sanding. Jade carvers learn and relearn the inevitable fact that once the piece has attained the desirable shape the work is only halfway done. The sanding goes on seemingly endlessly. The coarser sanding may be done by hand with shaped pieces from grindstone blocks. Later stages of sanding most often are done with diamond impregnated pastes applied with a motor-driven rotating tool which may be nothing more than a hardwood or bamboo dowel.

To emphasize the tedium of sanding consider the carving of Cameraman. The carving's shape rather much looked at eight months into the project like it is seen now in the photograph. But it took yet another seven months of several stages of sanding to achieve the final desired finish. It can be disheartening at times to realize that the intended shape has been obtained but as much interval again is required to complete the sculpture.

The Cameraman carving was a particularly challenging subject. A 1:1 model was crafted of wood and clay. Initial cuts were made with a saw then came the grinding. And more grinding. What turned out to be a constant dilemma was creating the tripod legs. Not only are there angles within each tripod leg that must match the others but that



▲ 'SCOOTER RIDE'
SIBERIAN NEPHRITE JADE
2005
4.75" W X 5" H

all three tripod legs required the same angles to arrive at the same corresponding platform position. No small number of templates were created from phenolic sheet (electronic insulative material) to act as guides. It was a painstaking process of grind, measure, compare, grind, measure, compare.

The dioramic Saturday Morning Cartoons was one of the less tedious and more fun projects. Except maybe for making those little vacuum tubes, transformer and speaker and such inside the close quarters of the cabinet. As sculptors know, achieving proportion with human figures can be challenging. And faces can be exasperating to get right. When the entire head is smaller than a walnut the detail work is quite protracted. Achieving eye and ear symmetry can take hours.

It had been the intention this year to begin depleting the years of accumulated jade scraps to use in smaller short interval projects such as amulets and jewelry items. For some reason these 73 year old hands could not resist embarking on yet another months long project. And only recently yet another jade candidate for a larger project somehow found its way into the shop inventory. Oh, but if there only were another forty years of opportunity.



▲ 'TIPPY TOES'
ALASKAN NEPHRITE JADE
2014
6" W X 4" H





1 X 1 X 1 : JULIANNE KOHN

How did the idea come to you?

Making an Octopus pendant has always appealed to me, it being one of my favorite animals.

Process: Maquette? Drawing? Direct Carve? Other?

Using a cheap enamel pendant as a general idea, I altered the design so that it was my own. Secondly a waterproof double-sided template was made and laying it on the flat surface, the design was transferred to the rough slab. A sintered Diamond carving wheel took the straight edged slab to its curvy edges in no time. Drilling the seventeen holes however, took an entire day, though. It was completed by the end of the symposium.

Hardest part?

I think the most difficult part was repeatedly drawing on the jade using the template to separate the tentacles and give the piece some movement and depth.

Easiest part?

I found polishing it to be the easiest part of the process although no steps in this sometimes tedious process were skipped. I usually do enjoy the finishing process seeing the end reward of all the effort.

What did you learn from the making of this piece?

I learned a great deal about Jade as a carving medium. It is said that you must respect the material but not let it bully you. I am certain I will still pursue larger scale sculpture but I must say, there is something very satisfying about creating a small sculpture that you can wear every day.



▲ OCTOPUS PENDANT, 2-1/8 x 2-3/4", NEW ZEALAND JADE

THE DOJO

By Tamara Buchanan

道場

At each NWSSA International Symposium our organization creates an area where persons who have never carved, or haven't carved for a long time, have an opportunity to create a stone sculpture. A large tent is provided. Work tables and bankers are available. All manner and types of tools can be checked out to use.

were helping ...but I had no alternative name. The next day, a work-study fellow, Grant, suggested "The Dojo." I was familiar with the word as we have a Dojo on Lopez Island. It's a peaceful building in the woods that is used by various groups as a place to exercise, sing, or meditate. The word for me meant a place that was inclusive, inviting, and open. It felt right to me, but was it just a little too "strange" for our group?

Wikipedia says: "A *dōjō* (道場) is a hall or space for immersive learning or meditation. This is traditionally in the field of martial arts, but has been seen increasingly in other fields, such as meditation and software development. The term literally means "place of the Way" in Japanese."

"Immersive learning" is certainly what we're about in our Dojo. The learning often involves stone, or tools, or learning about yourself...it's all up to you. As the week progressed, the term The Dojo was embraced by many. Our Dojo was a place of great learning, much patience, and a good share of happiness.



▲ INSTRUCTOR TRACY POWELL DEMONSTRATING HOW TO CARVE LIMESTONE IN THE DOJO.

An experienced sculptor is present to make sure that anyone can get started on a project, learn about safety, tool use, stone selection, design and more.

This area has always been called "the beginner's tent." The term has never been a true fit for this special place. The area is so much more than a place for 1st time carvers. It is a "seed bed" for people who want to try something new, for carvers who haven't touched a stone in years and want a refresher, for experienced carvers who want to try out a new tool, work out a design problem, or just need advice on a project. It's really an on-field hub.

This year, as we set up the tent area, I expressed my exasperation of the term "beginner's tent" to those who



▲ ATTENDEES GOING ABOUT THEIR WORK IN THE WELCOMING SPACE OF THE DOJO.





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If you'd like to see your work in color in the Journal, Sculpture NorthWest, (circulation over 275 copies) let us know.

We are accepting submissions for
the *Spotlight*, *Quick Look* and our new feature, *1 x 1 x 1*.

Contact Lane at lane@whidbey.com or Penelope at artist@crittendensculpture.com.

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2018 CARVING CALENDAR

Camp Pilgrim Firs

Port Orchard, WA

July 6 – 14, 2019

Suttle Lake

Sisters, Oregon

August 11 – 18, 2019

And don't let us forget our friend Peter Becker who brings us stone ideas from around the world in the monthly, online [stone-ideas.com](http://www.stone-ideas.com).

<http://www.stone-ideas.com>
