

# JEWELRY MAKING GEMS

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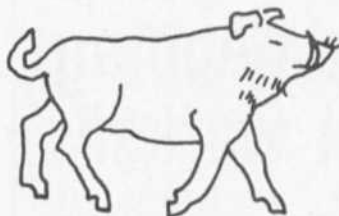
AND MINERALS

恭賀新禧



OUR COVER...

# THE YEAR OF THE BOAR



1995  
1983  
1971  
1959  
1947  
1935  
1923  
1911

"Gung Hay Fat Choy" — Happiness and Prosperity for the New Year! By Asian astrological reckoning, the Year of the Boar will commence at midnight on February 12, ending the reign of the dog. 1983 will be Chinese lunar calendar year 4681. Conceived more than 3000 years ago, the Oriental zodiac consists of "twelve terrestrial branches," represented by twelve animals denoting years, not months as in ours. The zodiac in our system marks the twelve places at which the sun and the moon come into conjunction, whereas the Chinese divide the celestial sphere into 28 constellations according to the "Cycle of Sixty." In 1983, the Boar (Chu or Shih) will be in the 60th year (Kuei Hai) in the cycle; its corresponding element this

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Cover Photo  
By Tom Colman

year is Water (Shui). We note that for each time in a twelve-year period that the Boar symbol is preeminent, a different element, one out of five, is in ascendancy (Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water). Therefore, the identical combination occurs only once in every sixty years!

Persons born under a particular sign are believed to possess the characteristics identified with those of the particular symbol. It is common for a Chinese, when giving his age, to state the animal pertaining to the year of his birth. An affectionate name for the pig

is "long-nosed general." The wild boar is a symbol of the wealth of the forests. "People born in the Year of the Boar have great inner strength. They are kind, affectionate, honest and gallant people who never retreat from the goals they have set for themselves. They have short tempers, yet hate to quarrel. They are shy, rarely seeking help from others. They have a deep desire for knowledge and are generally well-informed. Rabbit and Sheep people can tame the Boar, while Snake people may involve problems." (From a pamphlet compiled by Karin Dore.)

"The first explicit mention of the practice of denoting years by the names of animals ... is found in the history of the T'ang dynasty, where it is recorded that an envoy from the nation of the Kirghis? spoke of events occurring in the year of the hare, or of the horse. It was probably not until the era of Mongol ascendancy in China that the usage became popular; but, according to Chao I - A.D. 1727 - traces of a knowledge of this method of computation may be detected in literature at different intervals as far back as the period of the Han dynasty, or second century A.D...the system was (probably) introduced at that time by the Tartar immigration." (Reference: *Outlines of Chinese Symbolism and Art Motives*, P. 412, Third Revised Edition, Dover Publications, 1976, NYC.)

According to tradition, before the stroke of the New Year, the house must be thoroughly cleaned, and those who follow still the old customs, will place brown sugar on the lips of the Kitchen God, who, in turn, is known to report to the Heavenly Emperor at midnight. Likewise, all debts owing in the Old Year must be paid. The men plan to have their hair trimmed before the New Year arrives; if done afterwards, their luck would be all cut away! The Chinese celebrate by setting off firecrackers to ward off evil spirits. Children greet their elders with wishes for "health, wealth and happiness," and the youngsters are presented with bright red packets of money. Red is the important color—all shades, from pomegranate to oranges. Hanging scrolls are placed on doorways. Flowers are everywhere in quantity—chrysanthemums, camellias, plum blossoms, and peonies.

Members of the Intarsia Class of the

禧新賀恭

"Gung Hay Fat Choy" — translation, "Happiness and Prosperity for the New Year." This greeting was done by Mr. Sik King Wang, an 80-year old Chinese scholar who is noted for his outstanding calligraphy. He was educated at the Pui Ying Middle School, Canton City, China, and is the former principal of the Chung Wah Chinese School in San Francisco. To this day Mr. Wang remains very active in the Chinese Community Church.

Gus Ehtee, a member of the San Francisco Gem and Mineral Society, uses the special intarsia tool (see diagram) to cut a butterfly design into a slab of stone. Photo by Franz Roth.

