

The Opal Express  
 American Opal Society  
 P.O. Box 382  
 Anaheim, CA 92815-0382



Member

Member



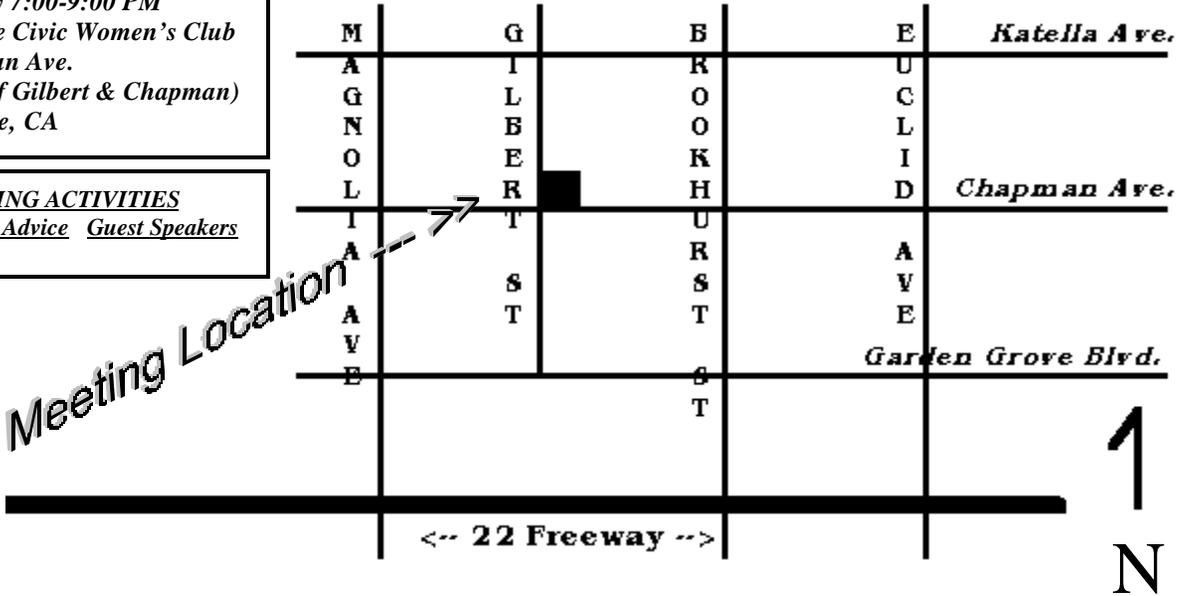
Volume #30 Issue #05 May 1998



TO:

**GENERAL MEETINGS** —  
 2nd Thursday 7:00-9:00 PM  
 Garden Grove Civic Women's Club  
 9501 Chapman Ave.  
 (NE corner of Gilbert & Chapman)  
 Garden Grove, CA

**MEETING ACTIVITIES**  
 Opal Cutting Advice Guest Speakers



**American Opal Society Officers**

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<b>Russ Madsen</b>	<b>Editor</b>	(562) 425-9788 email 76550.1366@compuserve.com

# DUES POLICY REVISED - effective 1/1/98

Henceforth, memberships begin in the month a person joins the Opal Society. This simplifies the fee structure and will reduce questions and errors in dues payments.

Three (3) Dues Rates are for families and are now based on your county of residence.

Rate #1 (\$26): *Local area* = members who reside in Los Angeles, Orange, or Riverside counties.

Rate #2 (\$20): *California & USA* = all US addresses other than local counties.

Rate #3 (\$30): *Foreign* = all memberships outside USA.

**SENIOR DISCOUNT:** Age 65 and over, deduct \$5 from the above rates.

**Label Changes:** Your address label now displays your dues expiration date as MM-YY where MM is the month and YY is the year your dues expire. Expiration dates also appear in the membership roster.

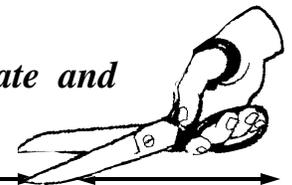
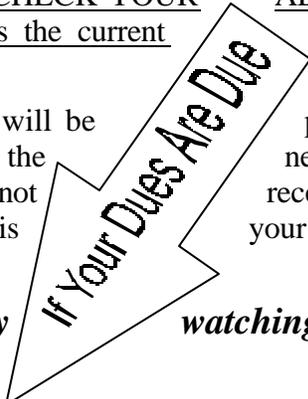
Are Your Dues Due Now? PLEASE CHECK YOUR ADDRESS LABEL or the membership roster if you are listed there. If your label shows the current month/year your dues are DUE NOW. If the date is older, your dues are **overdue**.

**Renewal Grace Period** of two months will be receive two additional issues of the system is now set up, if your renewal is not dropped from membership thereafter. It is current.

provided. If your dues are due now you will newsletter. Please note however that as the received you will be **AUTOMATICALLY** your responsibility to assure your dues are

Please help us make this work by renewing promptly. Thanks!

watching your expiration date and



## DUES RENEWAL FORM

(membership renewal form rev. 1/1/98)  
d:\ameropal\news\tr\forms\dues\_due.pub



American Opal Society, Inc.  
P.O. Box 382  
Anaheim, CA 92815-0382

**Thank you for continuing to support your American Opal Society!!**

**Make check or money order payable to: American Opal Society, Inc.**

**Please mail payment and renewal form to the club address at left.**

DUES RENEWAL RATES (select one)	
**	
1) LOCAL AREA member	\$26.00
(addresses in Los Angeles, Orange, & Riverside counties)	
2) CALIFORNIA & USA	\$20.00
(all addresses outside local area counties)	
3) FOREIGN	\$30.00
(all addresses outside USA)	
** \$5 SENIOR DISCOUNT = Age 65 or	

DEALER LIST: Yes, include my name/address on a list provided to Opal Dealers selling at the most recent Opal Show.

(if yes, please sign or initial here) \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

← without your signature here you will

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER: Yes, include my name and/or address and/or phone information in a published AOS membership directory...

[Please circle any of these → NAME / ADDRESS / PHONE if you prefer a partial listing.]

(if yes please sign or initial here) \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

← without your signature here you will

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ APT #: or PO BOX: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTRY (IF OUTSIDE U.S.) \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: Home ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ : Business ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

FAX ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate any name or mailing address changes

**NAME BADGE ORDER FORM: (OPTIONAL)**

Number of badges ordered \_\_\_\_\_

(\$5.00 EACH - includes engraving)

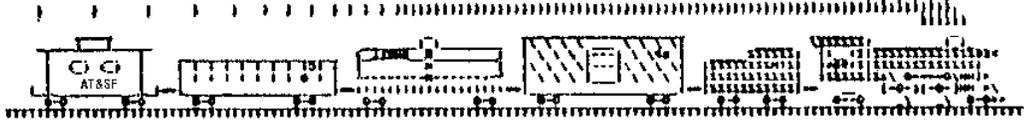
**PLEASE PRINT NAME AS YOU WISH IT TO APPEAR ON YOUR BADGE using up to two (2) lines of text for your name, nickname or name of your opal related business.**

# The OPAL EXPRESS

MAY 2002

Published monthly by the American Opal Society

Issue 5



## President's Message

from Wes Roth

Greetings,

This month's lecture will be on Intarsia Jewelry and Carving. John and Corliss of 2 Roses Studio have been involved in the lapidary field for the last 14 years. They also prospect for, and mine, the materials they use in their creations.

As members of the Metal Art Society they do all their own metalsmithing. They are also members of the Searchers and the Bead Societies.

In regards to the field trip please see Russ Madsen's information on the trip to Barnetts Opal Mine on this page.

See you at the meeting

Wes Roth

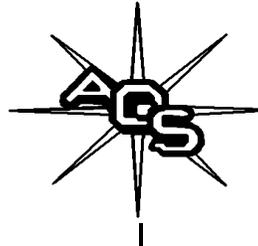
You might just be a rockhound if .... you know the location of every rock shop within a 100 mile radius of your home.

## FIELD TRIP TO DIG OPALS IS SET!!

The often discussed and long awaited field trip to Opal Canyon is now set! **The date is Saturday May 16th.** To assist newcomers finding their way, we will meet at the Subway Sandwich store on the north end of Mojave at 9AM Saturday and from there caravan to the mine no later than 9:30 AM. The 35 mile drive from Mojave to the mine takes about an hour. Please be sure to have enough fuel in your vehicle to make it both ways (70+ miles).

If you have not been to Opal Canyon before please refer to the article on page 3 of the April 1998 Opal Express. The digging ranges from noodling in tailings to hard rock. The **most important**

*(Continued on page 5)*



AOS VOICE MAIL HAS BEEN CANCELED

### workshop Information...

The Opal Society workshop is located in a light industrial complex in Fullerton. The address is Unit #9, 651 N. State College Blvd.

Directions: exit the 91 Fwy onto State College Blvd. and go north. Proceed through the intersection of Orangethorpe continuing a short distance further on State College. Go over the railroad tracks and turn left into the complex on the west side of the street. If you go over the second RR crossing turn around. Proceed behind the front row of businesses and make your first right. Then follow the road around to the left. The workshop has a large "9" over the door.

Only AOS members may use the equipment and workshop. You will be required to sign a release form as well.

Workshop Schedule on Page 5 shows dates/times and appointment instructions. ☼

### DATES TO REMEMBER

Director's Meeting  
Monday May 11-7PM

General Meeting  
May 14th-7PM

Opal Show  
November 7th & 8th

### *INSIDE THIS ISSUE*

Dues Renewal	1	Welcome New Members !!	4	Cerro Gordo Dumps Digging	5	Workshop Safety	6
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# The McCondra Report

by Barbara McCondra

## *Barbara McCondra throws a collector's hat into the opal arena*

I'm wondering just which arena of the "opal subject" I should explore this month. It is difficult to choose. Now THERE is a good topic----- the many arenas of interest that attract those who study and collect! There is opal jewelry; the buyers, collectors, and aficionados in this arena keep so many miners, cutters, artisans, and merchants in business as the healthy trade in opal jewelry flourishes century after century. The history of opal jewelry is but one arena. Its lore, superstitions, mediaeval curative powers, the fascinating stories of romance, intrigue, and politics of famous pieces make for riveting reading.

This brings us to the **collectors of books** on opal. What a fun collection. We may not be able to afford those infamous opal gems themselves but we certainly can collect their written history and photos when they exist. My bookshelf has been made heavier step by step as my collection broadened. It began with the current non-fiction books on opal in print, expanded to those that are out of print, and now include the fiction books that include opal in the plot. Magazine articles on opal now occupy a stack area on the bottom shelf.

I do have a small collection of **opal specimens** of course for my pleasure, for teaching purposes as I spread the opal word, and for sale as other collectors cajole, plead, and wave money in my face to possess the prime examples.

The **mining of opal** is an arena all its own. Different continents, heck, states within those continents, vary in their mining methods. These are dictated by the equipment available to the miner because of availability or financial resources and by the geological structure of the host rock---volcanic or sedimentary, deep or shallow, plentiful water or drought conditions. The history of individual areas is its own arena.

Opal stones are collected avidly by the investment minded. The patterns of opal give a collector a goal as they acquire an example of each. I know collectors of triplets and doublets who have gathered an outstanding representative group of patterns in an affordable range that makes the collection as a whole priceless.

**Specimens of opal in situ** (the surrounding host rock still holds the stone) is another category. Remember that the list is formidable of types of opal.: volcanic, sedimentary, organic, synthesized, and soon possibly other planet. The list goes on to include: common opal, commercial grade, and gem grade. Let us not forget its



## Name Badges...

**Price per badge is \$5** which includes the badge itself and engraving of up to two lines of text: one line for your first and last name and, if you wish, a second line for nickname or if applicable, your opal related business name. These engraving options give members flexibility to include many types of identification.

Please allow 3 to 4 weeks for completion of engraving. ✿

many forms: rough, seam, nobbies, matrix, boulder, and opalized fossils. Geography provides its own categories that are well chronicled in Allan W. Eckert's most recent book, *The World of Opals* and include locations worldwide!

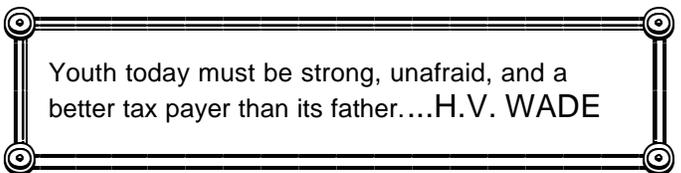
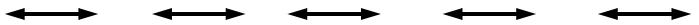
The **base color** that opal's fire emanates from range from chocolate, white, crystal, black, blue, green, red, and many shades in between including pink. These colors hold true for a fascinating collection made of potch only which can include geographic areas, colors, picture stones, opal type, and form.

Speaking of form we get into collecting **shapes of opal** i.e.: rough, cabochoned, faceted, carved, fossil, beads, freeform, mosaic, intarsia, inlay, and chips.

If I were to think of opals as other collectors of collectibles do, I must include opal from individual named mines and the antique paraphernalia connected with the mining. There are those who save paperwork, photos, letters, brochures, news articles, ads, etc.; an opal scrapbook. I do not want to leave out today's modern way of keeping, the OPAL VIDEO.

I have lived my life in a way that allows me to collect opal people. Hah! Not in jars but in the spheres of my life. They may be madmen, amazons, and mongrels; scientists, addicts, and authors; or mentors, customers, and competitors. They along with opal enrich my life each and every day.

**Does the list go on?** You out there may know a methodology of collecting I haven't thought of. So, with my article topic for this month solved, I leave you to start a collection of your own that will bring you many hours, yea, years of pleasure. ✿



**PLEASE NOTE!!!** The American Opal Society assumes no responsibility for injury or damage due to accidents or carelessness. Members and guests assume all risks

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Editor---Russ Madsen

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E-mail 76550.1366@compuserve.com

(Deadline for items: 15th of the month prior to each issue)

# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

## #1168 Larry Ott



Hey El Niño,  
It's SPRING time,  
Hear!?



## Membership Roster Changes/Additions

New Listing - Larry Ott 3278 Lantern Coach Lane NERoswell, GA 30075 (770) 642-6355 Member # 1168 Dues Expire 99-04  
Changed Listing John & Evelyn Hall 106 Willie Horton Dr. Ruidoso, NM 88345-7708 Member #0029 / 0030

## Bonanza Opal Mines

*A memo to all opalholics*

The day that you have all been looking for has finally arrived. Bonanza Opal Mines, Inc., will have "Pay Dig Tailing" available to you starting Memorial Day 1998. The fee will be \$40.00 per day, per person. Digging hours will be from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM and closed on Tuesday and Wednesday. After all, we need some time off from packing all those opals we are going to find. For anyone not familiar with Virgin Valley, instructions follow on how to find us:

Virgin Valley is located approx. 28 miles west of Denio Jct., On Nevada SR 140. Watch for signs saying "Black Opals" on the south side of the highway. Turn south and proceed until you come to the Virgin Valley campground – camp spaces, water, & shower available. Road veers to the right. Proceed approx. 100 yds. To the fork in the road. Take the right fork and proceed approx. 3 miles toward the Peacock Opal Mine. You will then see our sign on the left side of the road. Cold drinks and maybe ice will be available.

Bring the family for a great outing. ❁

From Rockhound Notes 4/98

### "White Buffalo" Turquoise

When discovered in the Dry Creek Mine on the Shoshone Indian Reservation near Battle Mountain, Nevada, in 1993, they were not sure what it was. Because of its hardness, it was decided to send it to have it assayed. And their suspicions proved correct; it was in fact white turquoise. It was not until 1996 however, that it was finally made into jewelry.

Turquoise gets its color from the heavy metals in the ground where it forms. Blue turquoise forms where there

## ITEMIZATION

**ITEM:** Wes Roth placed the AOS club show case in the Searcher's Show for the weekend of May 2 & 3. Thanks Wes! On Saturday afternoon of the show Mike Kowalsky got a call from the Searchers urging that someone from the AOS come right down-there was something wrong with our case. Mike arrived well prepared for whatever eventually may have befallen the case. He was able to repair the back panel which had become detached; then replaced the opals in the display. Thanks Mike!

**ITEM:** Bob Dixon, AOS librarian, regularly helps out as communicator and liaison with the Searchers G&M Society. Thanks Bob!

**ITEM:** Annette Bryant has been helping out with the newsletter by folding, stapling, labeling, and applying postage – a big thanks for the assistance with this chore Annette! ❁

Virgin Valley  
Nevada  
BONANZA OPAL  
MINE-Tailings  
Fee Digging  
To Open  
This Month



is copper present, which is the case with most Arizona turquoises. Green turquoise forms where iron is present; the case with most Nevada turquoises. White turquoise forms where there are no heavy metals present, which turns out to be a very rare occurrence. To date, no other vein of white turquoise has been discovered anywhere else and when this current vein runs out, that will be the last of

it. Because white turquoise is as rare as a white buffalo, the Indians call it "White Buffalo" turquoise.

The Shoshone Indians are not known for jewelry work and as a consequence, the Shoshones sell or trade the white turquoise to the Navajos in Arizona who then work it into jewelry. ❁

From Gems of the Foothills 12/97 via Rockhound Notes 4/98

# Field Trip May 16th

(Continued from page 2)

**tool is a pair of (OLD) wire cutters** to be used for clipping windows in potential opal nodules.

A special opportunity mine owner Richard Barnett has added this year...there will be **sample opal-bearing rocks available** for purchase from Richard's personal collection at prices ranging from \$5.00 to \$20.00 each. Each rock shows at least one opal and those who have dug before know that there's always a possibility of more stones within a chunk of matrix.

Jane and I will not be able to stay for Sunday but for those who might, please be aware that this is a dry camp with outhouses. Camp sites with fire rings are available, but you must bring all necessities (water/food/etc) and please haul out all trash.

Expect temperatures during the day to be on the warm side, but unlikely to be much above 90'. Overnight temps should be cool but probably not below mid 40's.

If you have any questions, we will discuss the trip at the upcoming General Meeting Thursday May 14th or you can call me (Russ Madsen) during the day at (562) 425-9788. ☼



## CERRO GORDO Mine Dump Digging

**June 13 & 14, 1998**

This event is for all mineral collectors, rockhounds, micromounters and people who are interested in rocks, ghost towns, interesting destinations, and all around fun.

**We start at 8:00 AM – We will quit at dusk.**

This is a dig for fee. Fee is \$6.00 for one day or \$10 for two days. The dumps are LARGE and there are many.

### Historical Cerro Gordo Ghost Town

Bring your camera and your enthusiasm

**Directions:** From Lone Pine, take Hwy 136 east 13 miles to Keeler. Just south of Keeler, take Cerro Gordo Rd., go east 9 miles to the mine. High clearance vehicles recommended.

**Contact:** Jody Stewart at (760) 876-5030 or Francis & Francee Pedneau at (760) 876-4319

*Hosted by Lone Pine Gem and Mineral Society*

*And*

*Cerro Gordo Historical Society*

From CFMS Newsletter 5/98

# WORK SHOP SCHEDULE

**Be sure to check here** for workshop schedule updates. The dates listed below are those available to the AOS in our time share agreement with the Searchers. The shop is presently being opened to members on Wednesday nights but...**Please continue to contact Stan McCall by calling him at Lapidary Intl. (714) 827-5680 if you plan to attend a shop session.**

## May 1998 AOS Workshop Dates

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	<b>4</b>	5	<b>6</b>	7	8	<b>9</b>
10	<b>11</b>	12	<b>13</b>	14	15	16
<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	19	<b>20</b>	21	22	<b>23</b>
24	<b>25</b>	26	<b>27</b>	28	29	30
<b>31</b>						

## WORK SHOP RULES

These rules are effective October 1, 1997. Please see newsletter for monthly shop schedule.

- 1) Shop may only be used by AOS members.
- 2) Shop users must sign liability waiver.
- 3) Shop users must sign in. Shop supervisor will maintain sign-in list and collect usage fees.
- 4) Shop usage will be in sessions on scheduled days as noted below:
  - Session #1 10AM - 2PM
  - Session #2 2PM - 6PM
  - Session #3 6PM - 9PM
- 5) Shop usage fees: effective immediately...  
**SHOP USAGE FEE IS \$3 PER SESSION.**
- 6) To assist us in scheduling, shop sessions need to be reserved in advance. Please contact Stan McCall or any member of the board of directors to reserve shop time.

## CANTERRA Opals

(While chatting with member Larissa Williams via email, Canterra opal was mentioned. I had not heard the term and upon inquiry, learned it describes Mexican opal which has been cut with the opal still enclosed by surrounding rhyolite matrix. Below is a dealer's discussion thereof.)

A Cabochon is generally cut in a rounded or oval shape with a dome and a flat bottom. These Opals formed in a matrix of fine grained, pinkish volcanic rhyolite. The Opal is formed by percolating ground water, what little there is in the desert, in small crevasses and voids in the rhyolite. Many (of these) these crevasses (are) "vugs."

Many fine Opals in the world contain a substantial quantity of moisture. Some then dehydrate after they are cut and are subject to cracking and losing some of their value. These Mexican Opals in matrix are cut in such a way that usually the entire bottom of the Cabochon is Matrix. This Matrix is (also) on the sides of the stone which gives it tremendous strength and durability.

The Opal formed in the vugs is then cut in such a way to expose its maximum beauty. Opals in matrix like these are not subject to the same dehydration problems that other Opals have.

The matrix holds some moisture and keeps the Opal strong and fiery. They are quite unique. The rhyolite is generally pinkish in color due to the original volcanic ash. The Cabochon is cut in such

a way so that the entire dome is one smooth area that is polished. The Opal takes a high lustre polish while the rhyolite takes a glassy finish. These are HIGHLY reflective. The more light they are exposed to, the more beautiful they become. It's an incredible phenomenon. ❁

CANTERRA OPAL  
Is Cut Mexican  
Opal With  
Matrix Still  
Attached

Excerpted from email rec'd from opals@mexopals.com 4/98  
Mexico Opalos Homepage <http://www.mexopals.com>

## And The Beat Goes On by Russ Madsen

Someone shake me I think I'm dreamin'! Below is a direct quote excerpted from Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia (on CD-ROM) copyright © 1993, 1994 Compton's NewMedia, Inc. Upon looking up the term OPAL and reading what I found, I almost fell out of my chair...

"...Two prime qualities give opals their beauty and value. One is a pearly luster, known as opalescence. The other is a shimmering play of rainbow colors as the gem is turned and viewed from different angles. **This is caused by innumerable tiny surface cracks** and internal irregularities that refract light rays in constantly changing patterns." (emphasis added)

(The article continues) "The finest black opals come from Australia. White opals are obtained from Japan, and fire opals from Mexico and Honduras. Several varieties of gem opals are mined in India, New Zealand, and the Western U S." ❁

## SYNTHETIC SPINEL CAPS

Now might be as good a time as any to mention the fact that some years ago, there were doublet caps sold which were made from clear synthetic spinel. They were nicely domed and cut to standard sizes. All that one need do was cement the caps to the selected doublet material and grind to the shape of the doublet cap. The synthetic spinel being much harder than quartz seemed to make a much better finished product. We still have some of these left kicking around somewhere.

Regards, John johnpat@ix.netcom.com ❁

From Lapidary Digest #91 12/7/97



## AFMS NEWS Safety

### ROTARY SLINGSHOTS

by Mel Albright  
AFMS Safety Chair

Do you know why slingshots are so powerful? The answer is that they use stored energy to accelerate something to a high speed. That makes them strike with a great deal of force.

How many slingshots are in YOUR shop? "None", you say. Sorry, you're wrong. EVERY device you have that goes round and around is a slingshot. Your cab machine, your hand tool, your faceter, and more.

If anything catches on one of these devices, it is accelerated – by kinetic energy this time – and becomes a dangerous missile. That means that when they hit they will have a great deal of force. And – YOU might be what it hits. Even worse, your EYE might be what it hits.

So what safety is required when using such devices? First and foremost is an eye shield of some sort. Some machines have one built in. But, most do not. So safety glasses or a face shield are in order. Both are inexpensive and available at your local WalMart or hardware store.

"But, my machine doesn't throw anything!" The needed word to add is "YET". All will at some time. For your safety, many are manufactured so that anything that is slingshot will go away from you ALMOST every time. But, even then, they can and have come toward the user.

I'll add a personal note about a rotary tool. I had a hard rubber wheel on (1/4" thick and 3/4 inch in diameter) and was polishing silver with in. The shaft broke. The wheel and the jagged shaft ran up my face shield and rammed into the wall behind the workbench. It left a dent like a hard hammer blow would. It also left a deep scratch right in front of my eye. I get chills when I think "What if". ❁

From AFMS Newsletter December – January 1997-8

## Eliminating Flats – The Problem

...Grinding and shaping go very smoothly. Now here is the problem: no matter what I do, I can't eliminate all the flats before polishing. As I move from 100 to 320 to 600 the larger flats are simply replaced by a larger number of smaller flats, no matter how many different ways I rotate the stone against the wheel and no matter whether with a light touch or with a lot of pressure. It seems like maybe the 8" wheels are producing a surface speed in excess of what is needed for such small size cabs. The cutting action seems too fast and the drum does not "give" like I think it should. Am I missing something here? Do I need to go to 6" drums or possibly Nova wheels? Any help with this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you, Derek Morton  
DMorton567@aol.com ✿

From Lapidary Digest #123 3/9/98

## Eliminating Flats – Responses

One writer failed to provide reprint permission but offered good suggestions. In particular Nova wheels were emphasized. With expandable drums the writer encountered a problem because the rubber wheels had aged and become too hard to "give" with normal pressure. ✿

Another suggestion was to pay careful attention to hand motion in order to smooth out the speed and rolling of the stone against the wheels. ✿

One person advised checking rotational speed of the wheels; still another offered the notion that tumbling can produce effective results. ✿

Sounds to me like you have some very "new" sanding belts. If this is the case, use a piece of scrap agate to wear in the belt so that it doesn't cut so fast.

The other possibility is too many RPM. If you have step pulleys on your set-up go to a smaller size on the motor, larger on the spindle.

Earl ewenglish@blueridge.net ✿

Have you checked to make sure that the arbors are true and that the wheels are centered??

If you're using belts on an expandable drum, is the expansion joint smooth, maybe its is out of alignment.

Your problem sounds like you are getting a chatter of some sort, which causes what is commonly called "Orange Peel", or flat spots. A wobble of any type will cause the problem you describe.

Gil Shea legal@mtaonline.net ✿

All above items From Lapidary Digest #124 3/10/98

Flats are not caused by the size or type of your expandable drums. Flats are caused by not keeping the stone moving in a sweeping action across the grinding surface. I prefer to sweep the stone from the center to the edge except in stones that are easily chipped and then I reverse the direction. You should not have any noticeable flat spots at the completion of the sanding stage. The prepolish should be to remove the minute surface scratches prior to polishing. Remember, your polish is going to be only as good as your prepolish.

You didn't state whether your machine is homemade or factory built. If you made your own check your shaft speed. An expandable drum becomes more rigid the faster it turns. I prefer a shaft speed of about 1000 rpm for 8" drums. If your motor pulley and shaft pulley are the same speed, you are probably running too fast. The formula for RPM is: Motor pulley diameter divided by the shaft pulley diameter times the motor speed equals shaft speed...Hopes this helps. Dave DaveRhyne@aol.com ✿

From Lapidary Digest #124 3/10/98

## FLAT SPOTS PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

A while back, someone was saying that he was having problems with getting 'flats' on his cabs; that there was insufficient "Give" in his wheels and it didn't seem to make any difference no matter how much pressure he applied. That was his first mistake.

Diamond and Carborundum are two different animals. Relatively speaking, about the same difference as between quartz and chalk. If you "Lean Into" a diamond wheel, you will get lousy results (flats, etc.) on your stone, and your wheels will wear out long before their time. (I just replaced the first two wheels on my wife's Pixie - and

she's been using it for seven years!) On diamond, you try to do your cutting (and everything else) by almost not touching the wheel. You use essentially no force. Don't "Grind" the stone - let the diamond wear it away, but keep spinning it. The technique is simply to use the whole face of the wheel, and keep your cab moving. Any time you stop, you just bought a 'flat!' Can't help it! It's the same principle as sharpening a knife on an emery wheel. If you don't want notches in your blade, you keep it moving.

You do almost ALL of your cutting on the coarsest wheel you have. If you leave ANY flats on the preform, you're going to have them on the final piece - can't help it.

And, finally, practice - practice - practice. Use some agate that you don't care too much about, and go through the procedures until out of ten agate cabs, you get ten you like. Then go to Quartz crystal, and do the same thing. Once you can cut and polish Quartz Crystal, you're proficient enough to go on; but do not expect to walk up to a nice new machine and start tumbling out flawless work the first thing. Machines, like people, take some acquaintanceship before you really know what you can get out of them.

To sum up, lean into your Carborundum and Emery wheels all you want; they can take it: but with diamond, be gentle, and it'll treat you right. Ted Robles <erobles24@hotmail.com> ✿

From Lapidary Digest #125 3/14/98

## CFMS NEWS – U Otter See it by Millie Ivanovich

Have you entered into competition recently? The field is wide open for new competitors. Try it — you might just learn something.

Whatever your specialty, you can enter it. Is it lapidary? Mineralogy? You won't find out if your exhibit is extraordinary unless you try. Your club should have an AFMS-CFMS Exhibitor's Book. If they don't have one, send for a book from Renata Bever. The cost is \$7.00 for the current book. You should also have the corresponding mineral list (\$2.00), the lapidary list (\$1.50) or fossil list (\$2.50). Renata has all of these.

I know the Rules book looks intimidating at first glance, but broken down into the divisions, it's not so difficult. Give one of us a call. The primary purpose of the rules is to help show off your lapidary skills or your mineral specimens. This is one reason for specifying the number of pieces in your show case.

If you have just one carving, enter for the Gem Carvers trophy, beginning, intermediate, or advanced. Enter a piece of jewelry for the Choate trophy. The rules for these are in the Supplementary Rules published in the February CFMS bulletin.

The three members of the Rules Committee are Millie Ivanovich, Norvie Enns, and Pat Larue. If you need some encouragement or clarification to some of the rules, just call one of us.

Millie Ivanovich (916) 451-2352  
Pat La Rue (909) 874-5664  
Norvie Evans (702) 786-9887

I have already had one call this year. I'm glad to help anyone.

Hope to see some new entrants this year. ✿

From CFMS newsletter 4/98 via Rockhound's Rag 4/98



### HOW THEY DID IT IN THE OLD DAYS

The first lapidary "how to do it" was written in 11 AD by Theophilus. In it, he describes the cutting and polishing of stones as practiced in India. Rock crystal was first cut into pieces with an iron saw charged with a slurry of sand and water. It was then cemented to a stick and smoothed by rubbing it on fixed wet sandstone of increasingly finer texture. It was then polished with moistened brick dust on a slab of lead. Powdered rock crystal was used in cutting and polishing emeralds, jasper, beryl, onyx, and other gemstones of that time. ✿

From rockhound news & notes (no date avail) via The Palomar Gem 4/98

## What's Happening?

### Calendar of Upcoming Events

#### Dates and Locations of Shows

**May 15 – 17** West Coast Gem, Min. & Fossil Show, Holiday Inn, Bristol Plaza, 3131 S. Bristol, **COSTA MESA, CA**

**May 16** 9AM-5PM **May 17** 10AM-5PM Conejo Gem & Mineral Club, Borchard Park Community Center, 190 Reino Rd., **NEWBURY PARK CA**

**May 30** 10AM-7:30PM **May 31** 10AM-4PM Goddard Middle School, 859 E. Sierra Madre, **GLENDORA, CA**

**May 30-31** Rockatomics, Gem & Mineral Society, 8500 Fallbrook Ave., **WEST HILLS, CA**

**June 6** 10AM-6PM **June 7** 10AM-5PM San Diego Lapidary Society, Al Bahr Shrine Ctr, 5440 Kearny Mesa Rd, **SAN DIEGO, CA**

**June 16 thru July 5th**, Del Mar Fairgrounds, 2260 Jimmy Durante Blvd., **DEL MAR, CA**

**June 20 – 21** Cayucos Gem, Jewelry & Mineral Show, Cayucos Vets Hall, at the Pier, **CAYUCOS, CA**

**July 3 – 4** 10AM-6PM **July 5** 10-5PM **CFMS Show**, Monterey Fairgrounds, **MONTEREY, CA**

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# World's Easiest Quiz?

## Questions:

- 1) How long did the Hundred Years War last?
- 2) Which country makes Panama Hats?
- 3) From which animal do we get catgut?
- 4) In which month do Russians celebrate the October Revolution?
- 5) What is a camel's hair brush made of?
- 6) The Canary Islands in the Pacific are named after what animal?
- 7) What was King George's first name?
  
- 8) What color is a purple finch?
- 9) Where are Chinese Gooseberries from?
- 10) How long did the Thirty Years War last?

## Answers:

- 1) 116 years, from 1337 to 1453.
- 2) Ecuador.
- 3) Sheep and horses.
- 4) November. The Russian calendar was 13 days behind ours.
- 5) Squirrel fur.
- 6) The Latin name was Insularia Canaria – Island of the Dogs.
- 7) Albert. When he came to the throne in 1936, he respected the wish of Queen Victoria that no future king should ever be called Albert.
- 8) Distinctively crimson.
- 9) New Zealand.
- 10) Thirty Years? 1618 ~ 1648! ❄

Hale Sweeney via AFMS Newsletter 2/98 via PVGMS Tumbler 4/98

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