

The Opal Express

American Opal Society
P.O. Box 4875
Garden Grove, CA 92842-4875



Volume #35 Issue #11
November 2002

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- Yella Jimmy - Conclusion
- Polishing Yowah Opal
- Origin of Desert Varnish
- Weights Used in Precious Metals & Jewelry
- Opal Setting Philosophy
- Feldspar - Ubiquitous Mineral

TO:

Important Dates:

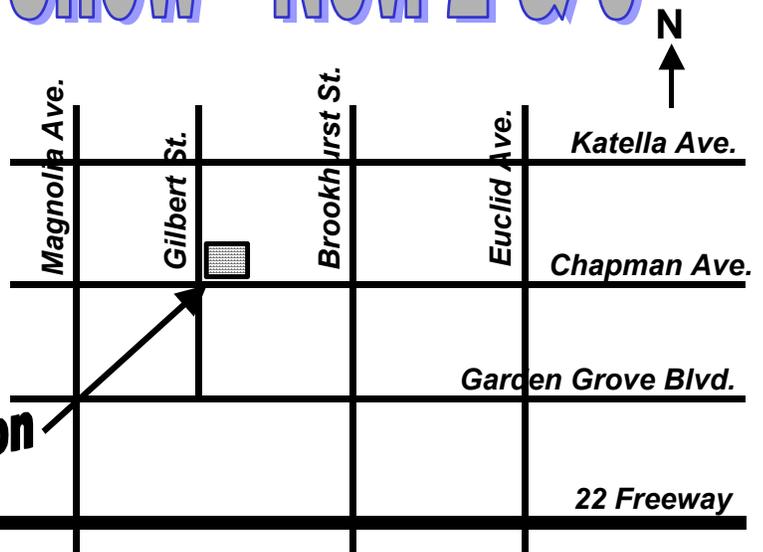
Opal & Gem Show: Nov 2 & 3
Board Meeting: Nov. 11
General Meeting: Nov. 14

Opal & Gem Show - Nov. 2 & 3

— **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
Slide Shows Videos Other Activities

Meeting Location



The American Opal Society

<http://opalsociety.org>

Mike Kowalsky	President	(714) 761-4876	email: mykowalsky@aol.com
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1) All US Addresses including Alaska and Hawaii	\$25.00	
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3) Additional Badges/each	\$5.00	
** SENIOR DISCOUNT = Age 65 or over deduct \$5.00	-\$5.00	
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NAME BADGE ORDER FORM:
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.

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER & DEALERS LIST: The AOS publishes a membership directory once per year in its Newsletter, the *Opal Express*. Your name will be included. Please check what additional personal information that you want listed for other members. If it is different from the information above, please note that on the application.

- Address Phone E-mail Website
- Include my name & address on a list provided to the Dealers selling at our Annual Opal & Gem Show.

Without your signature here you will not be included in the member info list or included in the dealer roster.

If you checked any box above, please sign here: _____ Date _____

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Editor-Jim Pisani

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Article Deadline is the 20th of the month prior to each issue

Are Your Dues Due Now?

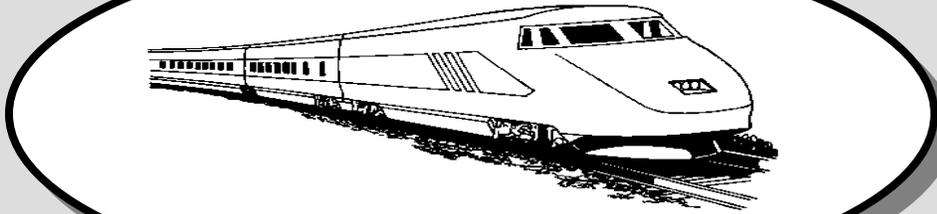
PLEASE CHECK YOUR ADDRESS LABEL. If your label shows the current month/year your dues are DUE NOW. If the date is older, your dues are overdue.

A Renewal Grace Period of two months will be provided. If your dues are due now you will receive two additional issues of the newsletter. Please note, however, that as the system is now set up, if your renewal is not received you will be AUTOMATICALLY dropped from membership thereafter. It is your responsibility to assure your dues are current.

Thank you,
The Editor

The Opal Express

Published
monthly by
The
American
Opal
Society



November 2002

Volume 35 Issue 11

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Mike Kowalsky

The AOS Board of Directors and the annual Show Committee have been busy with the contracts, layout of the show room, advertising, prizes for the free raffle and the major raffle. We are expecting a package with some additional opal books to add to the raffle prizes. I don't know what they are but I've been told that they are books of interest to Opalholics. I am sure we will have a large number of prizes for the raffle considering only the ones we already have in our possession.

I was able to visit the Whittier Gem and Mineral show this past weekend. It had some very nice displays that show the active membership's talents. I also met Mr. Valle at the Whittier Gem Show's booth. He said that his wife had won the grand prize of the Opal necklace at the AOS show in 2001. I told him they should come and try to win the new Opal jewelry prize that would be available this year. He is planning to come to our show this year and try to win the grand prize again.

The workshop at Walker Jr. High School has been closed and our equipment and other items stored there have been moved to a storage facility. We have looked at two possible sites for our workshop and have selected Ball Junior High School to relocate our workshop. There is a nice facility where we will be sharing the workspace with the woodworking shop. Both will not be operating at the same time. There is ample space and some storage for our machines and materials so that will simplify the problem of moving things in or out.

A few notes on our November show preparations. We sent out our major direct mailing to over 1100 individuals that have been to our show in the past few years. We are working on the local announcements to come out just prior to the show. We have been distributing flyers to all the local shows and have mailed tickets and flyers to all the Rock and Gem Clubs within the California, Arizona and Nevada areas.

From the experiences of the local shows it seems that while people are not traveling very far they are supporting local events such as gem shows. We expect that to be the case and expect very good attendance at our show

I'd like to thank every one for the support we will need to make this annual show a success. See you at the November Show in Anaheim on November 2nd and 3rd.

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AOS Opal & Gem Show Seminar Speaker: Bonita Chamberlin on Gemstones of Afghanistan

Bonita Chamberlin, internationally known geologist and anthropologist will be the feature speaker at the American Opal Society Symposiums being held at their annual gem and mineral show on November 2nd and 3rd at the Quality Maingate Hotel in Anaheim. Ms. Chamberlin has spent over 25 years exploring Afghanistan. She has co-authored a book "Gemstones of Afghanistan" which describes the history of gems and precious stone mining in Afghanistan. It describes the history of Afghanistan and the evolution of the country through the colonial period to the present borders.

Bonita is convinced that vast deposits of uranium and beryllium, oil and natural gas, gold and silver and the deposits of dazzling gemstones have the potential of making Afghanistan a very wealth nation.

Over the years Ms. Chamberlin has traveled through Afghanistan disguised sometimes as a man or as a native woman to slip by the Soviet army guard posts or while crossing the mountain ranges where the arms-smuggling Mujahideen had their arms smuggling routes. She had been in the country just prior to the recent war in which the U.S. participated in. She had stayed in the northern part of the country to avoid the Taliban forces.

Ms. Chamberlin has worked with the State Department to help identify the regions where there are the mine workings and where the gems have been uncovered by the heavy bombing by the Soviet Union during that invasion. The bombing has uncovered deposits of rubies, sapphires, emeralds and other gemstones. After that period ended, Ms. Chamberlin identified 91 minerals and almost 1500 potential mining sites. She has advocated a United Nations development program that would turn the Afghanistan gem and mineral deposits into a income source that would replace the poppies grown for the drug trade.

Ms. Chamberlin explained that the wealth of minerals were created by the unique geology of the area. Afghanistan is at the focal point of the collision of Earths plates as the Indian subcontinent rammed into the Asian Continent. This collision has formed minerals that exist in very few places on the Earth.

The two presentations will provide a view of the part of the world that few people have been to. Her slides and map presentations show the geology and landscape, as no other presentation will do. It is a must see presentation.

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**Announcing... The American Opal Society's 35th Annual
OPAL & GEM SHOW - Largest Opal show in USA!
November 2 & 3, 2002- Sat. 10AM - 6PM, Sun. 10AM - 5PM
Quality Maingate Hotel, 616 Convention Way, ANAHEIM, California
Close to DISNEYLAND One block South of Katella Ave. On Harbor Blvd.
Come to the show for great deals on an amazing variety of opals, gems, and jewelry.**

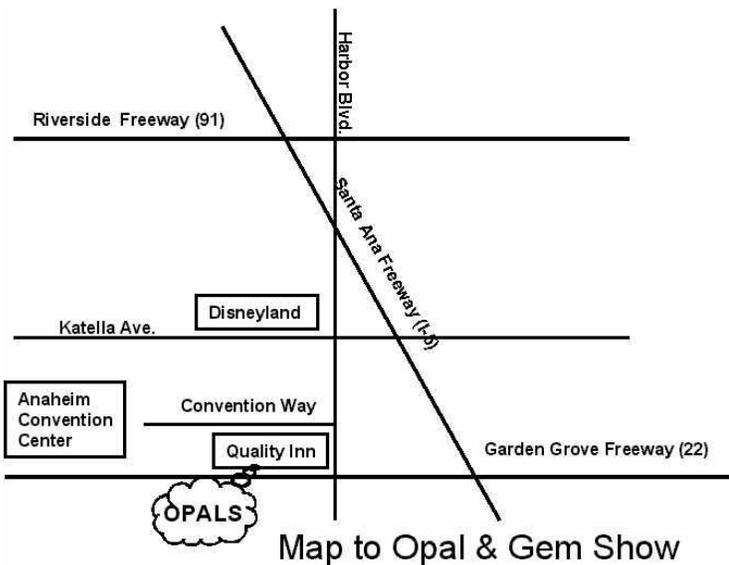
- Win a chance for a for all who attend with dozens of gems, opals, etc., as prizes,
- A raffle will also be held where the 1st Grand Prize is an Opal Necklace, designed by Conrad Cone,
- The 2nd raffle grand prize is a rare book: "A Journey with Color, A History of White Cliffs Opal, 1889-1999," by famous opal author Len Crams, will be raffled.
- "The 3rd raffle grand prize another rare book: *Rediscover Opals in Australia*", by Stephen Aracic. It is a complete anthology of Australian opal, with a real opal as a page marker (415 pages).

2002 Opal and Gem Show Dealers

Business Name	Contact Name	Specialty
Academy Enterprises	Duke Davey	Stones, Boulder Opal From Koroit, Yowah, Quilpie
Al's Opal Import	Albert Ramirez	Opal Rough, Cab, Faceted, Specimens, Jewelry, Ethiopian
Amore Gems	Joseph Halimmachmur	Opals, Opal Jewelry, Indonesian Jewelry
Arts Kingdom Jewelry	Anson To	Fine Jewelry, Specialty Items
Australian Opal	Leslie Neff & Larry Hoskinson	Australian Opal Of All Grades & Types
Australian Opal Imports	Geoffrey Genzmer	Australian Opal - Finished & Rough
Bonita Chamberlin	Bonita Chamberlin	Gems Of Afghanistan
Candida Opal	Dida Kutz	Opal - Boulder, Black, Crystal, Specimens, And Pendants
Casa del Lumbre	Salvador Chavez	Mexican Opal
Freeform Creations	Steve Solovieff	Select Fire Agate - Rough & Polished
Greg Howell's Quality Gems	Greg Howell	Opal, Gemstones, Finished & Rough
In A Flash	Tony Thurber	Australian Opal & Inlay Jewelry
J & J Gemstones	Joyce Sessions	Gemstones
Land of Wonder	Eric Scott	Australian Opals, All Fields, Calibrated & Freeform
Lapidary International	David Burton	Opal & Gemstones, & Jewelry
Lasco Diamond Products	Donald Schultze	Diamond Products For Foreom Tools, Etc.
Okanogan Opal	Bob Yorke-Hardy	Opal From British Columbia
Opalcutter	Wes Roth	Opal Rough, Finished, Jewelry
Oro Valley Gems	Edward Newman	Fine Facet Rough, Cut Gemstones, Jewelry
Parched Earth Opal	Barbara McCondra	Yowah Opal
Rock Our World	Michael Mael	Gems And Minerals
S. K. International	Shinko Lin	Opal Specialties
The House of Tibara	Tim & Barbara Thomas	Opal Rough, Finished, Jewelry
Tikka Opal	Mattie Tikka	Lightening Ridge Black Opal

Opal & Gem Show Seminar Schedule

Saturday; November 2 nd		
11:00 am	Leslie Neff & Larry Hoskinson	Coober Pedy
1:00 pm	Bonita Chamberlin	Gemstones of Afghanistan
2:00pm	Walt Johnson	Beginning Techniques of Jewelry Inlay Design
3:00pm	Tony Thurber	Advanced Inlay Techniques for Jewelry Design
Sunday; November 3 rd		
10:00 am	Tim Thomas	Mining at Hayricks Mine; Boulder Opal Cutting
11:00 am	Barbara McCondra	Yowah Mining; Boulder Opal
1:00 pm	Bonita Chamberlin	Gemstones and the Afghanistan Economy



Yella Jimmy - Part 3, Conclusion [A short story of a distant past]

By Colin W. Wurth

The plan took hold that night and moved faster than I could have expected, I didn't realize that Mark was such an organizer, we divided our responsibilities, he with the logistics, supplies, me with obtaining the latest in technology for the trip which included maps and directions and descriptions that were undreamt of in my youth, money was not a problem with Mark as it was with me, after my marriage broke down my finances did as well and it was part of the reason that I didn't give much attention to Tim's dream, the gap of time another, but Mark seemed to fill in all the gaps, most of all his enthusiasm was more important than anything else. Youth returned to me in a way I could never have imagined, the maps and my inquiries bought back vividly the enthusiasm of youth, if anything I was more confident of Tim's mine than I had ever been, Mark made plans that were thorough, the problems I encountered in my youth now drifted away.

The plan was reasonably simple, to fly to the three thousand miles and allow me a week to locate the mine, Mark became more impressed when I told him finer detail of it, the fact of location as I had long worked out would not be such a problem because of the fact when the two men who had worked it with the solid intention of returning they had put all their mining gear in the hole and covered it, Tim would not have realized that metal detectors in that barren country would tell accurately of its location and even in those days metal objects were in use to mine and certainly too heavy to carry the distances on foot.

Mark had located an airstrip that was used for emergencies and although I didn't tell him I had figured it was only six miles distant from my calculations of the mine. Weeks passed, Mark grew in my estimations, he committed himself totally to the venture but never enquired of the exact location of the mine, his faith was in me, he undertook all sorts of measures for contingency purposes with great efficiency, an efficiency I would never have dreamed he had possessed, his faith in my story and my version of history was a compliment in itself. The plan went ahead easily, there were no real problems and it came to the point we were ready to undertake the venture when I remembered for some reason of a man I had met many years before who had told me he had worked the region many years before and surprisingly I had remembered his name but didn't know where he was living, a phone call to an old friend in Queensland who was more in touch with the opal world and the

people in it was decided by myself a good idea so I gave my friend Alf a ring, " g day Alf, its Col Wurth " I said as he answered the phone, there was a silence for a moment which was the way with Alf the he answered, "Jesus cool I knew there was a bloody good reason I didn't get rid of this phone, how are you mate" I laughed as I always did with Alf. It was true he had only put on the phone a few years before onto his mining lease and from the day he did he threatened to have it disconnected which I was sure he would if it wasn't for his wife and two young children, " the bloody thing is the greatest threat I have had to my privacy in sixty bloody years," Alf was a true character who I had known for years and a true lover of opal like myself, "Sorry mate," I said with humor, " but I need a bit of information," Alf's attitude to a helpful manner as he always did," yeah well shoot Col," I told him about what I was doing in general terms and that I had talked to a man years ago who had worked the area in the forties and fifties and did he know who it would be and where he was living if at all, there was silence from the other end for what seemed like minutes but I knew this was Alf's manner of thinking, I could see his face as I waited for his reply, "Col the only bloke I know that worked up that way in the fifties was Lenny Cram," he said finally and suddenly the name Lennie rang a bell, " I think that's him Alf," I said with some enthusiasm, " is he still around mate," I said with barely concealed expectation, again another silence reigned, " yeah he was about six months ago mate, down at Lightning Ridge, doesn't do much these days, writes a bit though," he added and before I could reply Alf continued, " got his bloody phone number here somewhere cool, wait a minute I'll see if I can dig it out," I smiled the word phone was always accompanied by bloody in Alf's vocabulary, I knew I was in for a wait, Alf's filing system was something to be wondered at but I knew if he said he had the number he would not rest until he found it and this usually meant a wait of fifteen minutes to half an hour so I put the phone down, went to the fridge and got a beer and settled into the chair for Alf to come back on line, he had no idea of time on the phone, Alf was a world to himself. Finally his voice came over the phone as if he had only been seconds instead of twenty minutes, "yeah got it Col its Lightning Ridge," he told me the number and then we got to talking of the things we were both doing, I didn't talk to much about my plans to Alf, the bush telegraph is staggeringly fast in those areas and finally after about an hour we rang of, I sat down as I usually did after speaking to Alf and digested some of his colorful language and ideas with humor then I picked up the phone to ring Len, the man who I had met years before, I didn't think he would remember me, the phone rang for what seemed a long time then it was answered with a faltering tone, I began to explain to Len who I was but before I could finish he interrupted, "yeah mate I know who you are Alf and I were talking about you about six months ago," I raised my eyes, as I knew the bush telegraph in those distant parts was really staggering, I asked Len about Yella Jimmy, there was silence for a moment the I heard with his slow drawl, I could feel him recollecting long years past, " yeah mate I worked that area for about six months, nothing much there ya know, medium quality stuff, kept me in petrol money and that's about all," I smiled, I vaguely remembered him now, he was of Alf s generation and temperament, I questioned him now on what I really wanted to know, the location of the existing mine," mate its on the western side of a low range of hills running north south, its about nine or ten miles from the old Maynside ruins ya know," my heart leaped a little, these were the words I wanted to hear although I couldn't tell Len that, he talked on as if we had only seen each other a week or so ago, I think in his world he only considered not much longer anyhow, we talked generally about mainly opal and where they are getting it and where they were not and finally we hung up. I slowly analyzed Len's words and they completed the last piece of the jigsaw that was so old, his description of the isolated world fitted exactly to Tim's description and my careful memory of his words, ah.

After some time knowing it was getting late and Mark would be closing his doors, I wanted him to share the news so rang him and arranged for him to come over to discuss the latest on our imminent adventure, he readily accepted and said he would be there in an hour or so, I hung up and felt completely secure for the first time in many years, all plans were in place, the location in my mind was now clear and accurate and I wanted to go over the plans for one last time with Mark, my partner in the dream which I had sustained for over thirty years.

Apart, a large part of my life seemed to becoming to a reality that I had not thought possible for many years, my mood was buoyant, I made silly plans with what I was going to do with the money, along with other plans that I thought would change my life, I thought I would publish a book about Tim and his dream, all sorts of things ran through my mind in the slight euphoria that I felt, after about half an hour the phone rang, I picked it up with casual good nature, I thought it was Mark saying he would be a bit late or something similar then I heard Len's voice come clearly across, "hey listen Col," he said in the direct manner of a bushman, "you know we were talking about Yella Jimmy," I nodded absently, I wondered what Len could tell me that he thought a phone call was necessary, like Alf, he disliked phones, "Well mate what I forgot to mention was the bloody big strike those two blokes had in the seventies," my heart sunk but I said nothing, I listened intently, "yeah two blokes came there in a bloody old Ute in the middle seventies with nothing, I don't think they even had the petrol to get them back to wherever they came from and blow me down they struck it, right bloody opposite where I had worked for six months on that low grade stuff, mate it wouldn't have been more than two hundred bloody yards from where I was and I saw some of it, it was beautiful stuff mate, it was black opal at its best and it was in shallow ground to, only about three feet ya know," I listened with stunned silence as Len described in detail the finding of Tim's mine, I knew that what he was telling me was true, it fitted into the jigsaw so completely, Len continued for a few moments then said, "yeah I thought you might like to hear about it being so close to Yella Jimmy like it was," I muttered something and talked a little longer, Len didn't know the crushing blow he had delivered and in was glad when we hung up.

I slumped back in the chair, the news from Len had a rare numbing effect for although I had many disappointments in life it had been a long time since news such as this had such an effect on me, I knew the mine had been found, Len's description was exact in describing its location and there was no doubt in the vastness of the country it could be any other place, len's words rang in my ears, "you know they came there with nothing and they left with three D-6 tractors, a brand new Ute and God knows how much money in the bank," and "the opal was black and only three foot deep," Tim's words flooded back to me.

The news was clear, I went to the fridge and absently got another beer then without purpose I slumped into the chair, the old saying, "here today, a feather duster tomorrow," curiously sprung to mind, bad news that follows good news always has a deadening effect, I began to realize Tim's mine had been found, a few hundred meter's in the vast country was indisputable proof, emotions began to flash within me like flickering lights, I felt cheated, then angry, then hopeless but slowly a more positive mood began to form within me. Half an hour passed and I began to visualize that tall and gangling figure moving through the trees at the back of our old house, of the greeting I received as I would rush to meet him with five year old abandon his voice booming as he exposed his large teeth on his wrinkled face, "hello collie," he would announce. I could see the rather bemused look on my mother's face as she contemplated what to get him for his strictly vegetarian dinner. I can remember sitting silently, absorbed as he told of stories, of travels, of opal and of course Yella Jimmy. I could remember my father's look of mild disbelief and I could remember the joy he derived when I delved into his old cane basket full of fruit.

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Tim was a kind and honest human being, a dreamer who spent most of his life gorging on life's wonders and starving in its artificial world of materialism. Yella Jimmy was probably the only secret he kept from his fellow man and he guarded it no out of greed but against it, he gave me the supreme compliment with his knowledge, his idea of beauty didn't equate with money only to those he thought deserved it.

I sat reflecting on my memories of him, of his simplicity, of his generosity rapidly being replaced in the bustling, greedy and cynical world that he was not part of. I seemed to have let a fortune slip through my hands but I felt an enrichment I couldn't describe, maybe in some way this is the way Tim would like to see it work out, it mattered little who had found the desert gem his dream had been realized and dreamers still retained a foothold in a hard and demanding world.

I heard Mark's car pull up outside, I wondered how he would take the news but I didn't worry, I heard a siren wailing somewhere in the distance, I felt strangely comfortable, "Yella Jimmy" had bought a richness to my life over the years, a richness that lay not in the acquisitive nature of the society of the time but somewhere much deeper and suddenly I heard Tim's words, "hello Collie" then three knocks sounded on the door and I rose a little tiredly to open the door for Mark.

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Polishing Yowah Opal

LapDigest News for Issue No 233-235 9/27/99-10/1/99

Subject: NEW: Polishing Yowah Opal

Hi,

I am new to the list. As I reported in my BIO I was recently in Australia and purchased some Yowah opal and some black opal.

Some of the Yowah opal has numerous pits in it. Does anyone have any ideas on how these might be filled. I have tried Opticon and some glues but they do not seem to work real well. Any ideas would be helpful.

Also the Yowah opal I have polished does not seem to have the beautiful finish I saw on pieces in Yowah. I have been using Linde A on a felt cushioned pad but they were obviously using something different. If anyone has any ideas or suggestions please let me know.

The black opal polished beautifully.

In LD Issue 233, Joyce wrote:

<<I ..(snip).. purchased some Yowah opal ..(snip).. Some of it has numerous pits in it. Does anyone know how these might be filled? I tried Opticon and some glues but they don't work well. ..(snip).. Also the opal I have polished does not seem to have the beautiful finish I saw on pieces in Yowah. I have been using Linde A on a felt cushioned pad ...(snip)... If anyone has any ideas or suggestions please let me know.>>

Joyce, I've been working a few hunks of Yowah that I got from a guy who sells via the net and ebay. The last couple of pieces got a fantastic polish, using a polish called (I'm not making this up) Holy Cow! I've seen this at some Florida rock shows, and it's recommended by Phil Magistro, who teaches intarsia around here, and who was featured in Lapidary Journal a few months ago. Other than that, I don't know who makes it or where to get it, other than the guy I got it from, Guy Clark from Clark's Rocks in Clearwater, FL.

It's expensive at \$10/oz, but does put a wonderful finish on the two stones I've tried it on so far, opal and jasper. They advertise it as good for polishing pretty much anything, including metals.

So has anyone else heard of or use Holy Cow!, and know more about where to get it, etc.?

I'm fairly sure it's a mix of oxides. It's a white powder that you mix into a thick, cream like consistency. You apply it to your polishing pad with something non-metallic. I polish with it on a leather pad, and although it does tend to get thrown off the pad, it isn't worse in this regard than, say, cerium oxide.

As for the small round pits in the Yowah, I believe that's what's called maggoty Yowah. I just leave them. Each pit is ringed with fire, and I think it's attractive as-is.

Hope this helps, and I'd be glad to help answer anything offline by email.

Bob Lombardi

W4ATM in Melbourne, FL (ex-WB4EHS)

blombard@iu.net or blombard@freenet.fsu.edu

Visit the ATM's Resource List: <http://home.iu.net/blombard>

Or visit me at <http://home.iu.net/blombard/myhome.htm>

Bob:

Last week, I tried Holy Cow and it worked great on my miniature heart and cross! (Sold to me by Tom Benham -a list member, who taught intarsia at Wildacres. He said that he got it from Guy Clark (mentioned above) who 'invented it'. About the name, Tom said they first thought about calling it: 'Holy S---', based on the job it did, but thought it didn't sound proper ... thus the name. Tom thought it was a mix of Linde A and another polishing powder. I don't know anything 'cept it is a good polish!! I'll try to get Guy to write up something for the Digest.

- Hale

Hale...

Regarding "Holy Cow" polish I have purchased several ounces from Guy Clark and I swear by this polish. I use it for just about any stone and get superb results. One trick I have learned with it is to mix the powder with white vinegar to make the paste, and then while polishing, wet the stone occasionally with the vinegar. (I put a bit of vinegar on a paper towel and dab the stone on the towel.)

Guy's address is: Guy Clark, 24195 US Highway 19N # 123, Clearwater FL 33763 727-796-0330

When I spoke to Guy about using the vinegar he nodded his approval, and said that was a good plan!!

Jeff Ursillo

BNMJJEFF@aol.com Gem & Mineral Society/West Palm Beach

Hale...

I read your digest I received from Tom Benham and I found my name mentioned regarding my product "Holy Cow" polishing compound...in the article you said that you would like to know more about "Holy Cow"... well I'm the guy to ask... I developed, named and distribute the polish world wide...if you're interested let me know what you want...in the mean time the product can be obtained through me at my email address or by phone (727) 796-0330 after 4pm est. for \$13.20 per ounce including priority US mail...

Thanks,

Guy Clark CLARKSROCK@aol.com

Hi Hale and friends,

To polish Yowah or boulder you must have heavily silicated ironstone. The porous stuff from some fields will not take a polish. if you have this porous stuff get out the shoe polish coz that is the best you will do. The problem with Queensland matrix is that the opal and ironstone have different hardness and the opal will stand out proud while the ironstone undercuts. Therefore from 600 grit onwards use wet and dry paper instead of diamond and tin or cerium oxide for polish. The softer abrasives used in a minimal way (do not over work) will produce a brilliant finish in well silicated material. My wife was out looking

Opals The Queen of Gems

With continued buying trips to the Australian opal mines, we provide you with the lowest prices possible. We stock rough opals from \$10.00/ounce to \$5000.00/ounce from mines in Mintabie, Coober Pedy, Andamooka and the latest opal strikes in Lambina. Opals available by the ounce, gram or individual stone...special orders or shipping "no problems mate". We look forward to hearing from you!

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at a claim for sale yesterday and a (willy willy) giant dust devil lifted the roof on the camp she was visiting, and knocked a shed down on to our van. We have lots of adventures here. I am working full time on silver and opal jewelry this week. I enclose a photo for your inspection. Since posting on this group, both my social and business correspondence have increased enormously, I have met lots of new friends and fellow opalholics whom I hope to see personally here at the ridge. Till then, there are some new stones on my site: www.lightningridgeopal.com/4sale Back to the work bench now, Talk with you soon,
James J. Dumar @iniaccess.net.au

Origin of Desert Varnish

Desert varnish, a smooth black coating that accumulates slowly on rock formations ranging from small boulders to cliffs hundreds of feet high, has puzzled naturalists for many years. On the underside, where it is not exposed to the air, a varnished rock often acquires a glossy red-orange finish through interaction with water and minerals in the soil. Because of its striking appearance and widespread occurrence, the varnish frequently attracts attention, especially in national parks such as Grand Canyon and Zion where visitors query rangers about its cause.

For years scientists have assumed that desert varnish was composed primarily of manganese and iron oxides, precipitated out of the rock through weathering processes. However, the varnish structure eluded precise analysis because it is composed of particles too fine to be characterized by X-rays, the main diagnostic tool of mineralogical investigation.

Infrared spectroscopy, a technique which illuminates mineral samples with infrared light and records the pattern of absorbed wavelengths, was applied to the study of desert varnish by two Caltech scientists. George R. Rossman, associate professor of mineralogy, and Russell M. Potter, Caltech graduate student, used rock samples from 20 locations in California, New Mexico, and Arizona in the analysis of desert varnish. The samples included quartz, granite, basalt, rhyolite, quartzite, feldspar, and sandstone.

The results of the analysis revealed that the main constituent in desert varnish, totaling about 70%, is clay, not manganese and iron oxides. The oxides form the remaining 30%. The red coating on the underside of the varnished rocks, previously believed to be iron oxide, turned out to be 90% clay incorporating an iron oxide stain, similar to the iron in the black finish on the rocks' exposed portions. In addition it was found that all desert varnish, whether it formed on the side of a cliff or on a 10-inch boulder, shares a similar composition.

It was concluded that most of the coating collects from sources outside the rock rather than from material leached out of it, as many geologists had believed. One reason for this conclusion is that varnish is found covering non-manganese or iron bearing quartz crystals. Although some rocks may contribute oxides through weathering, the primary source seems to be wind deposited particles. Fine, windblown clay particles are a critical ingredient in forming the varnish, which first forms on rough, porous surfaces. These surfaces allow dew and other moisture to collect, depositing a thin film of clay when the water evaporates. This film of sediment on the rock's surface encourages water to migrate through tiny pores inside the film, depositing traces of manganese and iron as the water evaporates.

The formation of desert varnish is interdependent upon the clay and oxides. The dry, fluffy clay particles depend on the oxides to form a resistant cementing agent. The oxides, in turn, require clay particles for transportation and deposition. This is the underlying reason why all desert varnish that was examined contained both clay and manganese and iron oxides -- never one without the other.

From the B.C. Rockhounder, 6-2002

UNTRIED SHOP TIPS

Rubber Fingers: If your fingers are getting sore from holding thundereggs or similar rocks against grinding and polishing wheels, try "rubber fingers" to protect your digits. They/come in several sizes, are usually inexpensive, and can be found at any large office supply store. (*Marve & Kitty Starbuck in MWF Newsletter 11/00, via The Tumbler 2/01*)

Backing for Cabs: While assisting in teaching silversmithing at Wildacres last fall, I learned that if you use sawdust, pencil shavings, cardboard, or any other porous materials for a filler or cushion in the bezel cup, invariably moisture will penetrate into the space. When this occurs, the material will swell, and force the stone upward, forcing the bezel away from where it formerly rested against the stone. Then the material will dry, and the stone will be loose in the bezel cup. This loose stone will be more likely to fall out or have potential breakage from impact. The other ramification is that softer gemstones can sometimes be porous, too. This addition of moisture can cause discoloration, and even stress cracking from the inward and outward moisture changes. One cheap and readily available material is plastic sheeting. Try using the lids of cottage cheese containers instead. Recycle!

(from Mark Greenbaum, Lapidary Digest #199, via the Pegmatite, January 2002)

Weights Used in Precious Metals & Jewelry

Carat

The carat is used to measure the weight of diamonds and other gemstones. Since 1st April 1914 a carat has been standardized as 1/5 of a gram. It is sometimes called a metric carat.

There are, or were, 4 grains per carat. Because diamonds and other gemstones are expensive, it is necessary to use subdivisions of the carat. It is usually subdivided and recorded to 2 decimal places, a hundredth of a carat is known in rather un-mathematical trade jargon as a "point". Half a carat is therefore written .50 carats or 0.50 carats, and would be referred to as 50 points.

In ancient times, there were various values for the carat, which ranged from 0.1885 to 0.2135 grams.

Gram

A gram or gramme is a standard metric unit of weight. There are obviously 1000 grams per kilogram. In 1960, the ISO confirmed the IS unit system which was based upon the existing MKS (Metres, Kilograms, and Seconds) system.

The kilogram was defined as the weight of the International Prototype made of platinum and iridium which is held at the International Bureau of Weights and Measures in Sèvres in France.

Grain

An ancient unit, which was originally based on the weight of a grain of wheat. The grain is the smallest unit of weight in the avoirdupois, troy, and apothecaries systems. Surprisingly it is identical in all three systems.

4 grains = 1 carat

24 grains = 1 pennyweight

480 grains = 1 troy ounce

5760 grains = 1 troy pound

437.5 grains = 1 ounce avoirdupois

7000 grains = 1 pound avoirdupois

1 grain = 0.0648 grams

15.432 grains = 1 gram

Momme

A unit of weight previously used in Japan to weigh pearls.

75 grains = momme

18.75 carats = 1 momme

3.75 grams = 1 momme

Dram or Drachm

An ancient unit of weight, also a Greek coin, It is believed to have originally meant the amount which one could hold in one's hand.

16 drams 1 ounce avoirdupois

8 drams = 1 ounce apothecaries

1 drams = 27.34375 grains

1 dram = 1.772 grams

Imperial System

A British system developed and refined from the earlier Roman systems used in Britain during the middle ages. In 1824 the troy pound was defined or confirmed. In 1863 the Imperial or avoirdupois pound was redefined as 0.45359237 kilograms.

20 stones avoirdupois = 1 ton avoirdupois

14 pounds avoirdupois = 1 stone avoirdupois

16 ounces avoirdupois = 1 pound avoirdupois

1 ounce avoirdupois = 28.349523 grams approx.

1 pound avoirdupois = 453.59237 grams

1 ton avoirdupois = 2240 pounds avoirdupois

Troy

A system historically used for measuring the weight of drugs, precious metals and gemstones.

480 grains = 1 ounce troy

31.1035 grams = 1 ounce troy

12 troy ounces = 1 troy pound

20 pennyweights (dwt) = 1 ounce troy

1 pound = 373.242 grams

Pennyweight

The pennyweight was the weight of a silver penny in medieval England

24 grains = 1 pennyweight

20 pennyweights = 1 ounce troy

240 pennyweights = 1 pound troy

It is no coincidence that there were 240 pennies to the English pound, and 240 silver pennies were equivalent to a pound of silver, or that the word sterling applies both to the English pound and to a standard purity of silver.

From the B.C. Rockhounds, 6-2002

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Opal Setting Philosophy

Here is a thread of messages that I found in the Orchid Digest from <http://www.ganoksin.com> concerning setting opals. They were published from 8-01-01 to 8-04-01. The Ganoksin Project provides an information forum on the Internet free of charge for all things connected with jewelry and jewelry making. Visit it and see! Printed with permission of Ganoksin. The Editor

From: Dave Sebaste

Hi Folks,

And you thought we'd already beaten the subject of opals to death this year! Not quite yet! :)

I have an internal debate raging, and I'd like to see what kind of thoughts you people have on it. I guess this applies more to transparent and translucent opals (crystal, semi-crystal, etc.), than to opaque ones. I've heard of goldsmiths blackening the inside of a setting with a Sharpie marker in order to enhance the play of color. I have actually inserted black paper beneath the stone in the past. My thinking is that it might be better to polish the inside of the setting to be more reflective and keep the available light in play longer. Of course, it could be argued that



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this will alter the perception of the body color of the stone, too. My none-too-scientific testing on the subject was inconclusive.

To further complicate things, I'll often use an open back setting for an opal, for two reasons. One, to illustrate to the customer that it is a sold gem opal (as opposed to boulder, triplet, etc.) and two, to save on gold. Sometimes I'll pierce something in the back of a closed back setting to reveal the back of the stone in an artistic way. I'm really questioning whether this is detrimental to exhibiting the stone to its best advantage... although it is kind of cool to glimpse the piercing through the stone on a couple of them. Especially with an open back pendant, I suspect what it is worn on could have a bearing on how the stone appears.

Anyone care to share their ideas on this matter? Does anyone else torture themselves over silly little things like this? Thanks, Hanuman, for giving me a place to get some therapy for my fixation! All the best,

Dave Sebaste

Sebaste Studio and Carolina Artisans' Gallery

Charlotte, NC (USA) dave@sebaste.com

<http://www.CarolinaArtisans.com>

From: Kofoed Design

I recently did a pendant and earrings in white gold for a customer's white opals she'd gotten in Australia. The pendant I did with leafy vines minimally enclosing the stone- the back was open. Lovely stone, looked great. But the earrings I bezel set, with the vines along the outside of the bezel. Closed back with post. These stones lost all their fire in the bezels against the white gold. But when I darkened the inside of the bezel, they really popped. My philosophy? Whatever looks best. Janet Kofoed

From: Lee Einer

Actually, I think mounting a translucent opal with a highly polished back may turn out to hide the fire rather than accentuating it, unless it is a contra luz. It stands to reason, as a polished back has exactly the opposite effect of a black backing. It shouldn't be hard to test, though; take our translucent opal, place it on a mirror with good illumination, and then place the same opal on a black background with the same illumination. Which looks better? On a side note, and totally off-topic, I have

switched my operating system to Linux Mandrake 8.2. What a fantastic OS! I will never go back to MS Windows. If any of you want info on this, please contact me off-list.

Lee Einer

From: Don Rogers

<My thinking is that it might be better to polish the inside of the setting to be more reflective and keep the available light in play longer.>

Dave, the nature of opal, other than contra luz, is that reflected light produces color while transmitted light kills the color. This is the reason that a black backing is used on opals, it reduces if not eliminates the transmitted light. Using a polished backing will increase the transmitted light to the point that only a very bright opal, a 4.5 to 5+ would show color, and even that would be reduced because of the transmitted light. In case anyone is not sure what I mean by Transmitted vs. Reflected light, a window is an example of transmitted light, it is fully transparent. A mirror is a good example of reflected light, you can't see through it, but rather the light comes from the viewer's side. These are extreme examples.

In faceted stones, the desire is for transmitted light that is reflected by the pavilion. The light picks up the color of the stone and the greater amount of stone the light passes through, the greater amount of color imparted. If you were to treat an opal the same way, the fire would all but disappear. This raises some interesting problems for those of us who facet opal. We need to strike a balance between getting good reflected light and still maintain a transmitted light return. A contra I use opal solves this problem, as its color is from transmitted light.

If you think an opal would look better with a polished backing, you can test it by cutting a hole almost as big as the opal in dark paper. Lay the opal on a mirror, and place the paper over it so the opal is showing through the paper. Now with normal viewing light, appraise the color. Now take the opal and apply black fingernail polish to the back of it and appraise the color again. You will almost always find that the blackened back produces the best color.

There are ways to blacken the back of opals that are more permanent. The black marking pen is a temporary treatment as well as the black fingernail polish. Both are attacked by moisture and movement. The fingernail polish is more permanent than the marking pen. A coating of blackened epoxy is the best. Another trick is to use black RTV silicone and line the bottom of the bezel. Let it dry before setting the stone. This is tricky as you need to get an almost smooth surface as well as getting the depth correct, all without spilling over to the outside of the bezel. It is not a technique I would recommend, however I have repaired a couple designer pieces that had the opals set in this manor, and it was a very effective way of blackening the back. If you use the black epoxy method, you can set the stone while the epoxy is wet, but you must be very careful not to make contact between the back of the opal and the metal as you will get a spot of transmitted light through that distracts from the appearance of the stone. This is a common problem when doing inlay work.

Don Rogers

From: Michael Conlin

<And you thought we'd already beaten the subject of opals to death this year!> Not quite yet! :)><I've heard of goldsmiths blackening the inside of a setting with a Sharpie marker in order to enhance the play of color. I have actually inserted black paper> beneath the stone in the past.>

Dave: No solid answers follow, just a few thoughts... I've been wondering about this as well. I have noticed that some (especially white) opals seem to become much less dramatic as I finish the back of the stone. I am torn between two conclusions: 1) the polished back lets more light escape out the back, or 2) the polished back lets more light in to reach the face thus decreasing the relative brightness of the refracted light.

In "Opal Cutting Made Easy", Paul B. Downing, Ph.D. recommends painting the back of triplets. But he makes no mention of this technique for other opals. I've often wondered if it would work for other opals, at least increase the contrast of the visible play-of-color, but haven't gotten around to trying it. If you like the effect from black paper, I'd suggest black paper-micarta, available from knife making suppliers. It will stand up to wetting, soaking, etc and can provide a bit of cushioning. The "foiling" thread earlier this year inspired me to wonder whether it might be better to increase the amount of light coming back from the stone. But I'm not sure about the physics of this, given the nature of the diffraction that causes the play-of-color. Wonder what others will have to say...

Michael Conlin, President, Conlin & Associates 1-703-391-2521

From: Gerry

Dave, Opals are an addiction. After many years of opalholism I became cured over a very expensive lesson from opal. The lesson learned is do not try to make opal into what it is not. I was one who would do anything I could think of to make the stone better and more saleable. Now my philosophy is to display the stone in its best manner. I detest doublets and triplets especially when they are colored, dyed, or sugared to change them and create an illusion of value that does not exist. Another jeweler I know came up with a novel approach to clear body opals. He designed a solid back to the bezel, which he pierced in different designs. He used mostly astrological designs. Backing plate that was not cut away was oxidized black or polished. In this manner the customer could readily see that the stones body color was translucent. Artistic impression was conserved with the mounting.

Gerry Galarneauggwcr@cox.net, www.galarneausgems.com

From: H. Durstling

Hi everyone, My own approach is that when an opal has play of colour (fire), as a general rule, and with the exception of contra luz opal, the more transparent the stone tends to be the more it improves set in a black backing.

Cheers,

Hans Durstling, Moncton, Canada

From: Derek

It's funny; I find the opposite in a sense with opal. The dark background generally works best with clearer material, depending on the brilliance of the fire. I think shiny metal kills the fire because of the complicated way opal uses light. The mirror finish on metal often cancels the internal integrity of the fire. On white base, the darker background frequently does not work or makes little difference.

Derek

From: Les Brown

Greetings Dave, Re. your opal query: Basically, it's "yes" to

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everything you mentioned. It all depends on the stone and what works best with it - and safely. The play of color in transparent/translucent opals (so called white opals) can usually be enhanced if placed on either a black, or a white background material. I've set opals, which looked good either way, and it was a subjective choice as to which was preferable. I've set many others, which looked best on black primarily because it made the play of colors far more dramatic. If the stone in question has a yellowish tinge, then a white background often shows that up worse than a black one. However, the black background can cause the opal to show as gray, which is usually not attractive. When faced with this dilemma I usually try laying the stone on the two respective colors (pieces of paper) at the bench and see which appears best. In the case of a piece to order, you might want to involve the customer in the decision as well. Polishing the interior of the bezel - or matting it - usually tends to feed the color of the metal into the stone. With white metals this is not so much of a problem, but with gold I don't like the look - makes the stone too yellow and mutes the color play.

As for what to use behind the stone I have a couple of suggestions. I have pulled many opals set by jewelers unknown who used paper, or sawdust, or who knows what, to either pad and/or enhance the color of the stone. Anytime these came out of rings what was behind the stone was nasty, having taken on moisture resulting in the decomposition of the padding material. My first choice for white is to use the file dust from a piece of white delrin (the fellow who taught me, used sawdust from the bench pin). The delrin makes a great cushion material, provides the necessary white background, and is impervious to moisture. I have used the black delrin as well, but when it is filed the resulting filings are a definite gray, and not black. Only certain stones have looked good with it.

I have also used very successfully both white and black silicon rubber. If you don't want to literally glue the stone in with it you have to find a way to place the rubber in the bezel smoothly and allow it to set before setting your stone. You might try a dapping punch or chasing tool of the appropriate size and shape. Using a little water on the tool end helps to keep it from sticking to the rubber itself. I recently set an incredibly fractured opal a customer brought me by making a very close fitting heavy bezel and then using the silicone rubber to "set" the stone via the glue action. This meant no mechanical force on the stone at all, plus the added stability of the stone being laminated to the bezel with rubber. One can always purchase little bottles of black and white enamel from a hobby store and literally paint the back of the stone as well. Then you can use whatever you want for the padding material without fear of its affect on the color.

As for the open backs: While some stones - and finished pieces - can be very beautifully set in this manner it does have the potential drawbacks you mentioned, besides the increased danger to the stone in the setting process. Most opals are not that perfectly shaped on the back and getting a well fit seat around the edge is tough, which makes more likely a break if stone becomes bound between the force laying down the bezel and a minute high spot on the seat. Except for the very brave, the latter requires the use of a thin bezel material, which I am not personally fond of. Using the heavy bezels I do requires some cushion under the stone hence my preference for a backing material.

Thanks for wading through this,
Les Brown

From: coralnut

I agree with you Derek. A bright and shiny surface behind jelly or crystal opals really washes out the fire. So too leaving the back open on such opals tends to defuse the fire and you loose the brilliant flashes (with some exceptions though). White, gray, black, or other colored opals with opaque potch will not be affected by an open back but then there is no reason to polish the bezel base either. I often finish the back as well as the crown

on such opals and then set them open in front and back so both sides can be enjoyed. Guess personal preference comes in here. Cheers from Don at The Charles Belle Studio in SOFL where simple elegance IS fine jewelry!
dcdietz@attbi.com

From: Wellsie

Hi all, I have a couple of questions, what is a contra luz opal? Next, a few years ago I made a broach - silver with an orange Mexican fire Opal in an open setting - I wanted the colour to shine on the background. It looked good, but the fire - subtle to start with - doesn't stand out. I wonder if a darkened setting, as a few people have mentioned lately, would have been better? Any help for next time would be appreciated.
Philip Wells wellsie@xtra.co.nz

From: Don Rogers

<Hi all , I have a couple of questions , what is a contra luz> opal ? Contra Luz is Spanish for against the light. It requires light passing through the stone to exhibit it best color. It is usually a yellow, orange, or sometimes clear base color, and is mostly Mexican in origin, however Oregon produces some nice material also.

Don Rogers

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Feldspar - Ubiquitous Mineral

By Sandra I. Smith

Moonstone and sunstone, seemingly opposites because of their names, are in reality closely related members of the feldspar family. Formed when hot magma solidifies underground, feldspar makes up about 60% of the Earth's crust. It's found worldwide in one form or another. Mineralogists have identified at least 40 varieties of feldspar.

Moonstone is the feldspar most familiar to the general public. Other varieties used in jewelry include amazonite, labradorite, and sunstone. Moonstone contains layers of two kinds of feldspar, each of which reflects light differently. That's the source of its shimmering glow, which looks like moonlight. Schiller and adularescence are other names for the iridescent shimmer, leading to the alternate name of adularia for moonstone.

Nearly all moonstones come from Sri Lanka. Early Romans believed moonstone was captured moonlight. They began using it in jewelry nearly two thousand years ago. Some ancient peoples wore moonstones to protect them from epilepsy and sunstroke. It's also been used to stop headaches. Currently, those who attribute powers to crystals believe that moonstone is a receptive stone and wear it to draw love into their lives. They also use it for protection from danger when traveling.

Moonstone symbolizes the Third Eye in East India and is generally regarded as a sacred stone throughout India.

Although moonstone is usually translucent white, it occurs in a variety of colors, ranging from colorless to gray, brown, yellow, green, or pink. One form of labradorite feldspar displays many glowing colors. It's been named rainbow moonstone.

Amazonite, first mistaken for a kind of jade and named after the river where that jade was found, ranges in color from light green to blue-green to bluish. It's currently mined primarily in the United States.

According to folklore, amazonite brings success to those who wear it.

Blue, green, yellow, and copper-red labradorite is found primarily on the coast of Labrador. It's also mined in Madagascar, Scandinavia, and the United States. Labradorite mined in Finland is known as spectrolite, because of its multiple flashing colors. Some people describe it as looking like oil on water.

Long considered a good-luck charm, labradorite is now used to enhance psychic abilities.

Sunstone is normally colorless or straw-yellow, but may have red or green markings. Most sunstone contains thin slices of hematite, which creates a brilliant metallic reflection. Oregon is the largest producer of sunstone, with deposits located also in Siberia and Norway.

Although no powers were attributed to sunstone by the ancients, contemporary wearers believe it helps alleviate stress.

Sodium, aluminum, and silica combine with either calcium or potassium in differing amounts to form feldspar. Not only is feldspar found throughout the world in all kinds of rocks, it's also a component of some meteorites.

Mineralogists divide feldspar into groups with names like orthoclase, plagioclase, and oligoclase. Those names refer to the way in which the crystals are formed. Feldspars used in jewelry are generally cut into rounded shapes, called cabochons, to best display their glowing colors.

From *Orchid Digest* from <http://www.ganoksin.com>

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NOVEMBER GEM SHOWS

2-3--ANAHEIM, CA: 35th annual show, "Opals of the World"; American Opal Society; Quality Hotel Maingate, 616 Convention Way; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$3.50, seniors \$3, students \$1.50, children under 12 free, parking \$1; rough and cut opals, gemstones, jewelry, books, supplies, opal and gem dealers from Australia and U.S.; seminars on opal jewelry design and opal mining, door prizes, grand raffle with many prizes; contact Bob Dixon, P.O. Box 4875, Garden Grove, CA 92842, (714) 525-7635; e-mail: jaycarey@gte.net.

2-3--CONCORD, CA: 43rd annual show; Contra Costa Mineral & Gem Society; Centre Concord, 5298 Clayton Rd.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; admission \$2, children under 12 free with adult; 22 dealers, 10 demonstrators, 54 exhibits, crafts, jewelry, turquoise, jade, amber, opal, beads, beading supplies, rough stones, slabs, museum-quality specimens, children's activities with free specimens, silent auction, hourly door prizes, raffle; contact Sam Woolsey, (925) 837-3287.

2-3--OXNARD, CA: 33rd annual show, "Galaxy of Gems"; Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society; Oxnard Performing Arts Center, 800 Hobson Way, Oxnard, CA; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-4; free admission; displays, vendors, demonstrations, grab bags, games, food, country store, plants; contact Anne Lewis, (805) 485-6356; Web site: www.ogms.net.

2-3--RIDGECREST, CA: 47th annual show; Indian Wells Gem and Mineral Society; Desert Empire Fairgrounds, Mesquite Hall, 520 S. Richmond Rd.; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-4; free admission; field trips at 9:30 on both days; contact John DeRosa, (760) 375-7905.

2-3--SAN DIEGO, CA: Show, "Greater San Diego County Gembores"; Palomar Gem and Mineral Club; Al Bahr Shrine Center, 5440 Keary Mesa Rd.; Sat. 9-6, Sun. 9-6; admission \$3, children under 12 free with adult; dealers in minerals, supplies and crafts; demonstrations, displays, drawings; contact Don Parsley, (760) 745-6181.

9--TUCSON, AZ: Silent auction; Old Pueblo Lapidary Club; Old Pueblo Lapidary Club, 3118 N. Dale; Sat. 9-2; finished jewelry, machinery, faceted stones for mounting, other items submitted by club members; contact Jim Griffin, 9231 N. Moon View, Tucson, AZ 85742, (520) 219-0335.

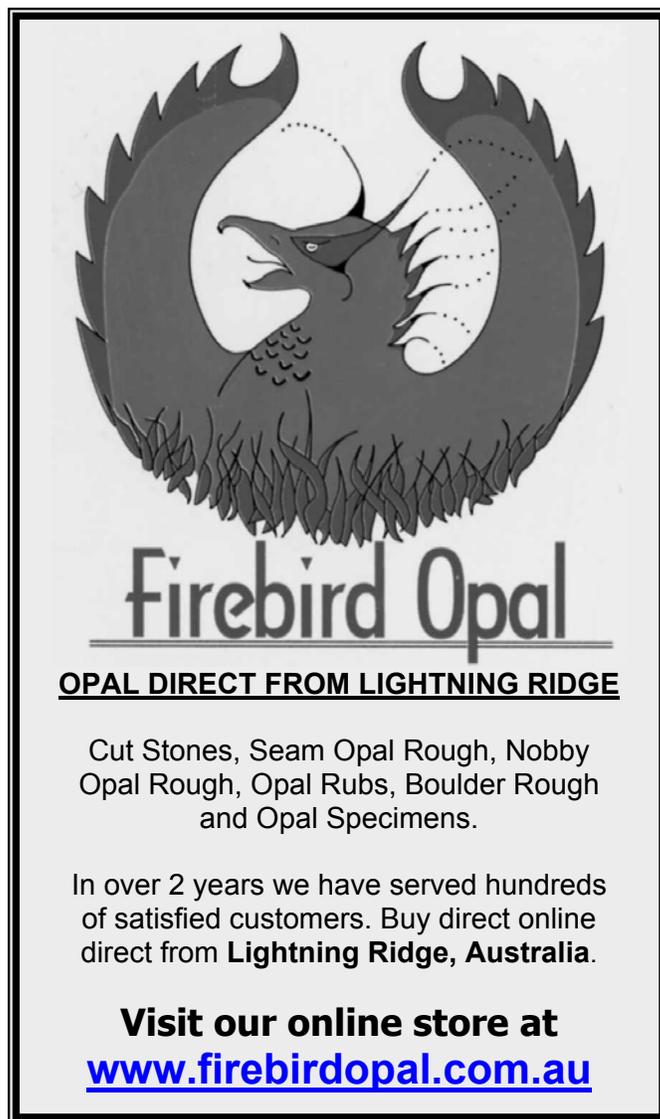
9-10--LAKE HAVASU, AZ: 32nd annual show, "LHC Rocks 2002"; Lake Havasu Gem & Mineral Society; Lake Havasu City Community Center, 100 Park Ave.; exhibits, dealers, craft demonstrations; contact Manny Frisch, (928) 855-9324.

9-10--OREGON CITY, OR: 38th annual show, "2002 Rocks for You"; Clackamette Mineral and Gem Club; Oregon City High School Cafetorium, 11th and Jackson St.; Sat. 9-6, Sun. 10-5; free admission; displays, dealers, demonstrations, fluorescent show, children's activities, door prizes, snack bar; contact Bea Settle, (503) 631-3128, 15006 S. Redland Rd., Oregon City, OR 97045; or contact Dave Walter, (503) 981-3225.

9-10--SEDRO WOOLLEY, WA: Show, "Treasures of the Earth"; Skagit Rock & Gem Club; Sedro Woolley Community Center, 720 State St.; Nov. 9-5, Sun. 10-5; free admission; dealers, demonstrations, field trips, raffle, spin-the-wheel, silent auction, door prizes, food; contact Gene Straw, (360) 428-0432.

16-17--PALMDALE, CA: Show; Palmdale Gem and Mineral Club; CA Elks Lodge, 2705 E. Ave. Q; Sat. 9-4, Sun. 9-4; contact Gail Becker, 1538 Fall Ct., Rosamond, CA 93560; e-mail: Gail1010becker@aol.com.

22-24--PORTLAND, OR: Show; Gem Faire; Oregon Convention Center, 777 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.; Fri. 12-7, Sat. 10-7, Sun. 10-5; weekend pass \$5; contact Allen Van Volkinburgh, (760) 747-9215; Web site: www.gemfaire.com.



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22-24--WICKENBURG, AZ: 2nd annual show, "Way Out Wickenburg Way Gem and Art Fair"; Wickenburg Gem & Mineral Society; Community Center, 160 N. Valentine St.; Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; admission \$1; displays, demonstrations, dealers, grab bags, spin-the-wheel, silent auction, door prizes; tailgate sales are welcome; contact Bill Tracey, 35439 W. Carefree Hwy., Wickenburg, AZ 85390, (602) 558-8899.

23-24--BREMERTON, WA: Show, "Fall Festival of Gems"; Kitsap Mineral & Gem Society; Kitsap County Fairgrounds, 1200 Fairgrounds Rd.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; free admission; dealers, demonstrations, raffles, silent auction, food; contact Mike Heesacker, P.O. Box 921, Silverdale, WA 98383, (360) 697-4312; e-mail: heesacker@aol.com.

23-24--LIVERMORE, CA: Show; Livermore Valley Lithophiles; The Barn, Pacific Ave. at S. Livermore Ave.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; admission \$3, children under 12 free with adult; contact William Beiriger, P.O. Box 2936, Livermore, CA 94551, (925) 443-5769, e-mail: xyzzx@xyzzx.com.

30-1--BARSTOW, CA: Show; Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society; Barstow Community Center, 841 S. Barstow Rd.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; free admission; contact Bob Depue, (760) 255-1030.

30-1--ORANGEVALE, CA: Show, "Winter Wonderland of Gems"; American Gem & Mineral Society; Orangevale Grange Hall, 5807 Walnut Avenue; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; \$1 donation, children free with adult; hourly drawing, grand prize drawing; contact Hugh Brady, (916) 961-6868.

30-1--SAN FRANCISCO, CA: Show, "The Great San Francisco Crystal Fair"; Pacific Crystal Guild; Fort Mason Center, Laguna and Marina Blvd.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; admission \$4, children under 12 free; up to 45 vendors of crystals, minerals, gems, jewelry, mystical and healing arts; contact Jerry Tomlinson, PCG, P.O. Box 1371, Sausalito, CA 94966, (415) 383-7837; e-mail: sfxtl@earthlink.net; Web site: www.crystalfair.com.

