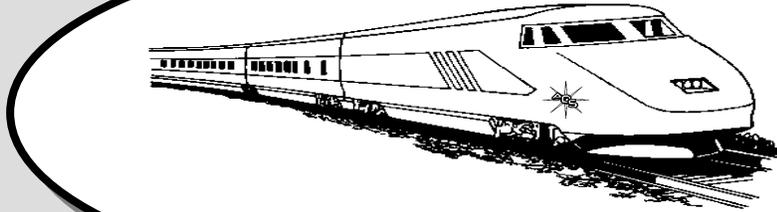


The Opal Express

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New Opal & Gem Show Venue Status

By Jim Pisani

The negotiations with the Phoenix Club to be the venue for our next Opal & Gem Show is about 95% complete and the contract should be signed this week. Kudos goes to Veronica Purpura, who has been spearheading the switching to the new venue. Veronica has been working tirelessly to work out the details of the contract, along with Russ Madsen, Jay Carey, and Pete Goetz.

Since we are about doubling our floor area for the show in the main "Festhalle" area, along with the ability to use the outdoor area around the hall also, we are planning on expanding the number of dealers. Discussions are taking place to broaden the appeal of the show. Topics such as plans to include more jewelry and to introduce arts and crafts to the show are taking place. Also, we are considering expanding the name of the show. We are doing the accounting to see if we can reduce the cost to dealers to encourage more to come. Plans to expand our advertising and promoting the show are also being made.

With the additional effort needed for our expanded show, we will be requiring more manpower to get the job done. We (The AOS Board) will be contacting and asking our members to contribute more of their time and skills to help make the show a success. We have an excellent opportunity here to do a number of things. We can promote our society's name and presence in the community. We can also strengthen the financial health of the society and therefore guaranteeing its future.

A description of the Phoenix Club (<http://thephoenixclub.com>) is in order. The Phoenix Club is a large, multi-building facility located off of the 57 Freeway on 1340 S Sanderson Ave in Anaheim, California. It is across the freeway from Angels Stadium and a stone's throw away and just north of the Honda Center, where the Anaheim Ducks play.

The Phoenix Club is a German cultural club that is open to the public. It has two authentic German restaurants and a German beer

garden. In addition, the large "Festhalle" is home to the annual Oktoberfest, in October, the weeks preceding our show.

In summary, I really believe that the Phoenix Club will be a great venue for our show. They are eager for us to be there also.

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Free Opal and Petrified Wood Collecting in Virgin Valley, Nevada

By James Fisher, Member, AOS

Hi, I was out at Virgin Valley Nevada this last summer and inquired at the Sheldon National Wildlife Range office at Virgin Valley about rock collecting on the National wildlife range. I was told that there is a seven pound limit per person on rock collecting per day from the wildlife range.

I noticed that a lot of the opal mining district had wildlife range lands directly over the surface outcrop of the opal beds, so I decided to walk some of the outcrop and see what I could find. I simply looked for the small white wildlife refuge signs and by staying behind the signs I walked on the public land which is closed to mining claim location. I immediately found large amounts of really nice and well silicified petrified wood well preserved and glassy in appearance on outcrop. The wood is in part opalized and some of it is silicified. The opal seems to weather white so the outside is no guide to the internal color. Numerous fragments of opal were found on outcrop. Since no digging is allowed on the national wildlife range collecting is easy and all you have to do is walk the outcrop. I did not find any precious opal but I only spent about thirty minutes walking the outcrop and collected my seven pounds of petrified wood. It is certain that by walking more area the precious opal would be found and since access is free to the wildlife range, the price is right.

I found an area on the Antelope range and have the coordinates so that people can plan where to look for opals on outcrop. I have heard of very good precious opal being found on the surface in Virgin Valley by people simply walking along the outcrop of the opal beds.

The particular area that I went to is about 100 feet from the road on the west side at the following location: 41.81810N, -119.07264W. This area is on the wildlife range and free to collect on. The signs are posted on posts and easily visible. By staying behind the signs you are on the wildlife range where you are free to collect but not dig. The petrified wood and opals are most common in a layer near the top of the small hill west of the road, approximately 50-70 feet higher than the road and about 20 feet from the top. There is lots of wood in this area with opal as well.

AOS Calendar for 2013

By Jim Pisani

Below is the tentative AOS Calendar for 2013. We need to fill most of the calendar with interesting speakers, so any suggestion from members would be appreciated.

| American Opal Society Calendar | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Date | General Meeting Topic / Speaker |
| 10-Jan-13 | Opals of The Americas, Part 2 – Jim Pisani |
| 14-Feb-13 | To be announced |
| 14-Mar-13 | Michael Greystock on Gold Detecting |
| 11-Apr-13 | Jason Zzyzx on Agates of Southern California |
| 09-May-13 | To be announced |
| 13-Jun-13 | Live Opal Auction |
| 11-Jul-13 | Opal Cutting Seminar |
| 08-Aug-13 | Member Show & Tell |
| 12-Sep-13 | To be announced |
| 10-Oct-13 | Opal & Gem Show Work Session |
| 03-Nov-13 | 46th Annual Opal & Gem Show |
| 04-Nov-13 | 46th Annual Opal & Gem Show |
| 14-Nov-13 | Opal & Gem Show Recap |
| 12-Dec-13 | AOS Christmas Party Potluck |

Members Only Website Password

To log onto the website's members only area at: http://opalsociety.org/aos_members_only_area.htm type: Name: "member" and Password: "opalyear".

Anaheim Arts Council Champion of the Arts Election Annual Fund Raiser

Hey all, the annual Anaheim Arts Council fund raiser Champion of the Arts is under way. We need everyone to pitch in with a tax deductible donation. Each dollar "buys" one vote. Yes you can BUY this election - if you wanted something you didn't get in November or you just know the outcome you want is the most valuable, here's your chance to make your dream come true!

!!! VOTE EARLY - VOTE OFTEN !!!

See Russ Madsen or any board member at each of the next three general meetings to sponsor your ballots. You will provide your contact information because there is also a prize drawing from all tickets submitted. You may be an individual winner. Also, proceeds are split 50/50; one half of each organization's sales are granted back to the organization so you will also be helping the AOS.

!!! THIS IS A WIN - WIN ELECTION !!!

All ballots from AAC member organizations will be counted during January February and March and the 2013 Arts Council Champion of the Arts will be announced at the Arts Council meeting (April 3 Soirée) at the Anaheim White House.

You Might be a Rockhound If...

1. You think road cuts are built as tourist attractions.
2. You describe your vacations by the rocks you brought home.
3. The rock pile in your garage is over your head.
4. Your PC screensaver features pictures of rocks.
5. You find rocks when you empty your pockets at night.
6. You gave rocks, tumblers, or rock tools for Christmas.

7. When friends say they're going to Tucson, you assume it'll be in February.
8. You can find quartz sites on a map in less than 5 seconds.
9. You can pronounce "molybdenite" correctly on the first try.
10. The polished slab on your bola tie is six inches in diameter.
11. The bookshelves in your home hold more rocks than books; and the books that are there are about rocks.
12. On a trip to Europe, you're the only member of the group who spent their time looking at the cathedral walls through a pocket magnifier.
13. You are thinking about giving out rocks for Halloween.
14. You planted flowers in your rock garden.
15. You purchase things like drywall compound just to have another nice bucket to carry rocks in.
16. The club you belong to uses rocks for center pieces for the annual Christmas dinner.
17. The first thing you pack for your vacation is a chisel and a hammer.
18. You spend hours and hours in the ugliest room in your home.
19. You bought the ugliest boots available because they were waterproof.
20. You know what findings are.
21. You watch the scenery in movies instead of the actors.
22. Your company asks you to not bring any more rocks to the office until they have time to reinforce the floor.
23. The local jewelry stores and libraries give out your name for information on rock clubs.
24. You examine individual rocks in driveway gravel.
25. Your local rock shops send you get well cards when you don't stop by in more than a week.
26. The baggage handlers at the airport know you by name and refuse to help with your luggage.
27. The city sends you a letter informing you a landfill permit is required to put any more rocks in the backyard.
28. You shouted "Obsidian!" to a theater full of movie-goers while watching the Shawshank Redemption.
29. Your children have names like Rocky, Jewel, and Beryl.
30. You get excited when you find a hardware store with 16 lb. Sledge hammers and 5' long pry bars.
31. You can't remember the last time your car still fit in the garage.
32. Local science teachers plan field trips to your backyard.
33. You begin fussing because the light strips you installed on your bookshelves aren't full spectrum.
34. You've spent more than \$10 on a rock.
35. You still think pet rocks are a pretty neat idea.
36. You have amethyst in your aquarium.
37. You associate the word "hard" with a value on the Mohs scale instead of "work".
38. You know the location of every rock shop within a 100 mile radius of your home.
39. You plan on using a pick and shovel while you're on vacation.
40. Your spelling checker has a vocabulary that includes the words "polymorph" and "pseudomorph".
41. You put a web page about rocks on the internet.
42. Your car hasn't seen the inside of your garage for ten years.
43. You associate the word "saw" with diamonds instead of "wood".
44. You begin wondering what a set of the Mineralogical Record is worth.
45. You decide not to get married because you'd rather keep the rock.
46. You make a backpack for your dog.
47. You've spent more than \$10 for a book about rocks.
48. You have mineralogical database software on your computer.
49. You send your family on ahead into MacDonald's so you can check the gravel in the flower beds.
50. You have 137 empty squeeze syrup bottles washed and ready to use as squeeze bottles on the next field trip.

51. You associate the word "hard" with a value on the Mhos scale instead of "work."

This list was written by members of the GMEDITORS E-Mail Swap Group. Contributors include Mel Albright, Richard Busch, Betty Commean, Dan Imel, Bob Keller, and Paul Kline.

Reprinted from www.amfed.org

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There's Opal in Them Thar Holes

July 29, 2012

Lightning Ridge is experiencing an outbreak of opal fever, writes Daniel Lewis.



In for a share... a crowd gathers in Lightning Ridge to apply for prospecting rights following the discovery of opal on a nearby grazing property.

The latest census put the population at 2492 but the big sign on the road into town defiantly declares: "Lightning Ridge population?"

More than a century since its founding, the colourful mining community still dances to a beat as rare, mysterious and anarchic as the beautiful black opal gouged from the earth beneath the outback scrub of north-west NSW.

The Ridge revels in the fact that nobody knows how many people are there trying to get rich or just get off the grid amid the Mad Max-style landscape of the opal fields.

And after years of depressed opal prices and low production, it is also reveling in its first opal rush in more than a decade. The community is buzzing about a new field called Bull's Rush on the property Barfield, 75 kilometres south-west of the Ridge.

Twelve prospecting blocks totaling 4663 hectares have been carved out of Barfield and when prospecting started on one of those blocks last month, a small team of miners "drilled up some colour", to use local mining terminology.

"We are all very excited," said Peter Sutton, who was part of the team that found the opal seam as they sank more than 100 holes over the 28 days their prospecting license gave them exclusive use of the block.

Mr Sutton said the opal at Bull's Rush is the best he has ever dug up. "It's nice and bright and good colour, predominantly a lot of red in it, which is the most valuable of the opal.

"When we went in [to the mining registrar's office] and made the claim ... the word got out and excitement was experienced by everybody. There's a bit of a rush on. Opal fever is a real thing, particularly when you find a few for yourself."

All the miners in Mr Sutton's team have grabbed their entitlement of two 50-metre by 50-metre mineral claims and a flurry of mining has begun. When another 28-day prospecting license became available last week, there was a crowd queued outside the registrar's office before it opened and 134 names went into a ballot.

Anthony Melonas, a delighted member of the ballot-winning consortium, said: "These are once-in-a-lifetime opportunities. You can feel the electricity in the air. The town's picked up. It's like the old days where everyone who's a miner is excited. This field could be huge.

"It's not a maybe, the opal's already been drilled up. It was very good quality. Because it's the start of the field we don't know how big it is yet. It's given a boost that the miners needed."

The find had come at the perfect time, Mr Melonas said, because the Chinese market has started showing interest in black opals.

Maxine O'Brien, the secretary manager of the Lightning Ridge Miners' Association, said one of the puzzling things about black opal was that it defied the rules of supply and demand.

"Opal is a weird and wonderful thing," she said. "The more opal that's come out of the ground in the past, there's tended to be a higher price miners got for their opal.

"The main impact [of the Bull's Rush find] will be to encourage a lot more prospecting in and around that area. Increased prospecting means hopefully more fields will be found and there will be increased production, which will help us to grow and sustain markets."

And Mr Melonas predicts there will be more big crowds outside the mining registrar's office. "I'd say that will be a monthly occurrence now. There will be a big queue. They might even start a sausage sizzle there."

From <http://www.smh.com.au/business/mining-and-resources/theres-opal-in-them-thar-holes-20120728-232uv.html>

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Man Finds 12-Pound Gold Nugget Missed By Hundreds of Prospectors

By Jesus Diaz

A prospector made an extraordinary discovery yesterday, when he found an "incredibly rare" 12-pound (5.5-kilogram) gold nugget under only 23 inches of dirt. The total price for such a happy unearthing: a whopping \$300,000. And he found it in a place where hundreds searched before, all thanks to state-of-the-art technology.

And it could be even more than that. At current market prices, 12 pounds of gold will get you 298,697 US dollars *but*, apparently it can reach a higher price because it's such a weird discovery. Geologists are impressed by the finding, which looks like howling jackal to me.

The anonymous prospector discovered the nugget in a field near the city of Ballarat, located on the Great Dividing Range in the state of Victoria, Australia, by the Yarrowee River. It's 8.66 inches (22 centimeters) on its longest side.

Cordell Kent, the owner of the Ballarat Mining Exchange Gold Shop, told the [courier mail](#) that the prospector was shocked by the discovery, just as much as himself: "He thought he had detected the bonnet of a car when he saw a glint of gold. He cleaned the top of it and the gold kept expanding and expanding... he saw more and more gold... he couldn't believe what he was seeing [...] We've got 800 local prospectors on our records. I cannot remember the last time we saw a nugget of this size."

Kent says that, surprisingly, Ballarat is still producing big nuggets after 162 years of gold rush. But this nugget is outstanding. The prospector found it in a nearby place where hundreds of gold

diggers have searched before, which makes the event even more surprising. He believes that the difference may have been the equipment. The gold digger used a [Minelab GPX-5000](#), a state-of-the-art metal detector that [goes for about \\$5,200](#). According to its marketing description:

The GPX 5000 sets the new benchmark in gold detecting technology. With an amazing range of features and functions the GPX 5000 is not only superior to its predecessor, the GPX-4500, and is in a class of its own. Featuring Minelab's exclusive technologies, Multi Period Sensing (MPS), Dual Voltage Technology (DVT) and Smart Electronic Timing Alignment (SETA), the high performance GPX 5000 is capable of finding more gold than ever before. From sub-gram nuggets to the elusive 'retirement nugget' and everything in between, with the GPX 5000, you can find it.

New improved electronics, new Soil/Timings and an amazing range of features combined with the legendary GPX ability to 'see through ground' mineralization, gives you a significant Depth Advantage over other detectors.



Well, it seems that the Minelab GPX-5000 works better than the competition, indeed. At least in this case. Best return of investment ever.

Record gold nuggets

While impressive and outstanding on its own right, this *howling jackal* is not the biggest gold nugget ever found. That's the [Welcome Stranger](#). This beast:



It was found by John Deason and Richard Oates in 1869 near Moliagul, Victoria, Australia. It was 171.9 pounds (78 kilograms) gross, 156 pounds (71.0 kilograms) net. The previous record belonged to the *Welcome Nugget*, which was also found in Ballarat.

The gold nuggets in Australia are [the purest in the world](#), "often are 23K or slightly higher." [[Courier Mail](#) and [Wikipedia](#)]

From <http://gizmodo.com/5976925/man-finds-12+pound-30000-gold-nugget>

Dangerous Dust

The Lapidary Hobby's Forgotten Hazard

By Douglas Hamilton

Rock & Gems, August 2010

(Editor's Note: This is not the complete article. It has been edited for available space. (I would recommend reading the entire article.))

When I first became interested in lapidary work, it seemed the perfect hobby. Today's equipment is simple, relatively cheap and very high tech. Working material is easy to find as rocks are about the most abundant material on the planet. The hobby is rewarding and exhilarating. And there is little danger of personal injury from runaway saws, faceting machines, or polishers. So after 30 years of procrastination, I finally decided to go for it and purchased a new rock saw and grinder/polisher. For the first few months I was in seventh heaven. All those lovely rocks I had lusted after for so long were finally put under my polishing wheel: lapis, agate, jasper, tiger's eye, malachite, turquoise, chrysocolla and quartz. But I soon began to experience a nasty and completely unexpected cavalcade of health problems: coughing, hoarseness, difficulty clearing my throat, breathlessness, and a dull ache in the pit of my lungs. I had always worn safety glasses as recommended in every manual, but a mask seemed a cumbersome hindrance. I tried several dust masks, but there was little improvement. I hit the books and started talking to fellow rockhounds. It was a revelation. Rock dust from lapidary work turns out to be more than just a nuisance; it can be deadly.

A single heavy dose can cause crippling lifelong problems. It attacks the lungs in a variety of ways: First, by coating the inner lining and blocking the transmission of oxygen into the bloodstream. Second, tiny sharp fragments slice and cut into the alveoli, which coat the inner lining of the lungs, causing irritations and inflammation. Fresh dust seems to be more harmful because the sharp edges have not had a chance to be softened by moisture. Some forms of rock dust are quite poisonous in and of themselves. Whether it is inhaled, ingested, or contacted by exposed skin, the effect can be injurious to your health.

Among the worst offenders are minerals containing copper (II) oxide (CuO), the higher oxide of copper, which can cause damage to the endocrine and central nervous systems. These minerals include some of our most colorful and treasured semiprecious stones: turquoise (9.8 percent copper oxide), chrysocolla (45 percent), and malachite and azurite (70 percent). It is worth remembering that other closely related copper compounds are highly bioactive and have been used in pesticides, fungicides, and wood preservatives for decades. This is dangerous material. These high copper rocks should not be licked to bring out the color, and oil mixed with the dust should be carefully cleaned off exposed skin. Symptoms of CUO dust poisoning mimic the flu, causing headaches, coughing, sweating, sore throat, nausea, and fever. Skin, eye, and respiratory tract irritation are also common, along with a distinct —metallic taste. A common name for these health effects is —metal fume fever.

In fact almost all the rocks most favored by cutters and polishers contain compounds that can be dangerous when inhaled. Silicates are the most common family of minerals on earth and silicosis has long been one of the chief hazards facing stone masons. The symptoms of inhaling crystalline silica (SiO) dust include shortness of breath, cough, fever, emphysema, pulmonary fibrosis, lung scarring, and increased susceptibility to tuberculosis and cancer. Silicosis often takes many years to develop from repeated exposure to low doses of dust, but once established it is irreversible.

The silicates include a bewildering variety of precious and semiprecious stones. The family includes quartz, chalcedony, jasper, agate, aventurine, bloodstone, carnelian, chrysoprase, amethyst, opal, onyx, beryl, petrified wood, obsidian, flint, chert, soapstone, sandstone, glass, and tiger's eye. In almost all of these, the content of silicon dioxide approaches or exceeds 50 percent. It should be mentioned that African tiger's eye also exposes the lapidary to another potent danger: asbestos. The vibrant optical effect of its chatoyancy is caused by parallel-oriented, finely fibrous amphibole asbestos.

You might be surprised to discover a very different kind of hazard: radioactivity from fossils. In a recent study of 300 randomly selected fossils from the Hagerman Fossil Beds of Idaho conducted by C. Neal Farmer, Ronald L. Kathren, and Craig Christensen, a hand held Geiger-Muller survey instrument detected discernible levels of radiation one to two orders of magnitude above the ambient level of background radiation in three-quarters of the specimens (—radioactivity in Fossils at the Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument, *Journal of Environmental Radioactivity*, Vol 99, Issue #8, August 2008, pp. 13551359)

According to the study, radioactive fossils seem to occur most commonly between 900 and 1,000 meters above sea level in ancient sandy riverbeds, while clay-rich deposits and those of other altitudes do not seem to show these high levels. Apparently, naturally occurring uranium produces radium, which decays into radon, an inert gas. Ancient ground water transported these radioactive elements into sandy fossil bearing areas where they precipitated out of solution during the fossilization process. Even small fossils like shark teeth and trilobites can have significant readings. While it is probably safe to collect most fossils, you should wash up and change your clothes after leaving the field. And always wear a respirator when you cut or polish the pieces – radioactive dust is highly carcinogenic!

But enough of the doom and gloom. This litany of dangers is not intended to drive rock lovers from their favorite hobby. On the contrary, a few simple precautions can almost completely eliminate the threat of injury from most rock dusts. Here is a list of suggestions that will make your workshop safer and allow you to enjoy lapidary work in good health.

1. Always wear a National Institute for Occupation Safety and Health (NIOSH) approved respirator with replaceable cartridges and dust filters. Respirators provide a wide variety of protection against dusts, solvents, fumes and mists. Avoid cheap dust masks; they don't fit tightly enough and they filter poorly. If you can, try on several different respirators at the store to get the best fit. Store the mask in a closed container or plastic bag when it is not in use and occasionally wash it with warm soap and water both inside and out.
2. An open window or air conditioner does not provide adequate ventilation for the lapidary work-place. The simplest solution is to work outside. This keeps most contaminants out of your workshop and costs nothing. For inside, consider setting up a local exhaust ventilation system. This would include a dust hood to collect contaminants, ducts to carry them outside, and a suction fan to power the system. Some wood-working tool suppliers have an ingenious system. They have adapted a wet/dry vacuum cleaner with a High Efficiency Particulate Absorbing or Arresting (HEPA) filter to collect shop dust. The system should work for rock dust as well. Information on this system can be found at leval-ley.com or elsewhere on the Internet. Search for —dust collection and —dust collection network.
3. Always use water or oil as a lubricant when cutting, drilling, polishing or faceting. Be aware there are problems with both fluids. When water evaporates, it stops holding the dust down, allowing it to become airborne. A fine oil mist laden with toxic dust can be kept out of your lungs with a good respirator, but it will settle on skin surfaces and stick like glue. Also, most

lapidary oils are highly irritating or poisonous to breathe and some like kerosene are flammable.

4. Always wear a head covering and apron and/or coveralls when grinding and change clothes after you have finished. Rock dust loves to stick to clothing and hair, and you will carry it around the house and breathe it all day long if you don't change.
5. Never dry sweep the workshop. Most of the dust will become airborne and migrate elsewhere. Use a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter instead. If you really want to get down and dirty, use a wet mop on the floor and a wet rag with a water bucket on other surfaces. Not all of these suggestions need to be slavishly followed. If you grind infrequently, you can probably forget some of them. (Not likely, this is cumulative)!! Individuals vary greatly in their tolerance to rock dust. Some will go through life with nary a problem, but others can be extremely sensitive. Low doses on a daily basis will slowly accumulate, and that dust isn't going anywhere once you breathe it in. Listen to your body. If your lungs start to complain, take more precautions; you only have one set to last a lifetime!

(Further Reading: *Health Hazards Manual for Artists*, 6th Ed. by Michael McCann, Lyons and Bukrford Publishers, 1994)

From the Oct. 2011 *Pick & Pan Newsletter of the Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society*, <http://www.csms.us/pickandpack/>

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From Rags to Riches

By Peter Greis

Chapter 31 – The New Equipment

It was Thursday morning; we are all up and got ready to do our so called chores. Johnny had his instructions what to do today and I was on my way to the shop to put all my Sausage making experience into action today.

At my lunch break I went to Laszlo to see how things are shaping up. As I arrived there was a Guy there he said hello to me and introduced himself as Steve Smirnof the owner of the Tucker box the other restaurant in Andamooka, no comparison to the Opal Restaurant which Gus and Lottie own. He recognized me as the drummer at the party at Gus's place. I said hello and we exchanged a few kind words and he invited me to come and have a drink or meal sometimes.

Laszlo was just cutting a hole in a couple pieces of Ply to fit the headlights which were out of a FX Holden.

He greeted me and said, "Everything is working fine; I just fit these lights to boards and put some rope on the end so you can hang them on a hook in the tunnel. I also got you a box for the battery with a carry strap made out of an old belt of mine which does not fit me anymore; I gave you 60 meters of electricity wire which I found.

The compressor starts real easy, virtually on the first pull of the starter rope, and the lights working fine even when the compressor is idling, which idles at 1200 rpm, with the whole lot of cable attached."

Laszlo said, "It will be ready for you by 4 pm this afternoon, when you got it take it easy for the 1st fifty hours to let the rings bed in, then you change the oil and you will be fine after that. With air supply valve shut off the PSI gauge shows 240 psi which is a hell of a lot as you only need about 120 psi to drive these Jack Hammers, so you can bring the rpm down to 2200 and run it on that which saves the motor and fuel, the motor peaks at 4000 rpm."

I said "I am very pleased, oh by the way can you loan me a couple Winch buckets for a couple of days, He said "no problem over there can you see them just pick as many as you need." I just need a couple and will return them on Monday, Ok he replied, "I will see you tomorrow arvo to settle up."

I told him. He nodded ok and I shook his hand and went back to the shop. The rest of the afternoon went really well in the shop; and

once I closed up Doug McCallum came and was offering to help me, I of course accepted his offer and gave him an apron and got him doing task which did not require butcher experience, while I was getting everything ready to make the sausages and meat patties. Once I had the sausage mince ready for stuffing into skins, we quickly cooked a bit of the sausage meat to taste the flavor, he said "they are great, I must tell my wife to cook some," I replied, don't tell me you have not had any before," He shook his head while he stuffed the last piece of meat in his mouth. I showed him how to twist off the sausages after I filled them with the sausage stuffer, which to my amazement he managed quite well. I made about 40 kg of beef and Pork sausages then we went in preparing the meat for the hamburger patties, I was mixing the mincemeat with onions and spices and he was working the hamburger press, we made about 20 kilo which is 200 patties, I stacked them in a large aluminum tray and in the cool room they went with the sausages.

We finished about 8 pm and he thanked me and left. I cleaned up the place and walked out at 9 pm got in the car and drove home I took some sausages and hamburgers for my meat allowance.

When I got home, Johnny was sitting outside and fooling around with some stuff from the buckets, and told me he done everything as required, I gave him the buckets and told him the compressor can be picked up from Laszlo tomorrow morning, this will be a good test to see how heavy it is to lift on the Ute. It had four six inch wheels but in this landscape they would not assist in any way.

I said to Johnny, "we maybe have to dig away some of the mullock so we can get the Ute closer to the Shaft instead of trying to get the compressor up near the shaft, we could never drag the compressor every day up and down from the shaft on to the Ute and so on. We do have long enough hoses and if not we always can get a coupling form Laszlo and more hose to extend it." Johnny agreed and said "I better find a way of securing it to Ute so it does not bounce around."

Anyhow I am sure you work out something, what you got there, I asked. He told me a lot of large patch pieces and not a flicker of any colour." He replied. "Well it is still a good indication" I commented, and went inside. Chris kissed me, and so did the little one, and I get asked how my day was. I told them all about it, Johnny came in and sat down and pushed a piece across the size of a match box, and it was all translucent with soft green, orange and blue colour. He said, "that's a piece of Jelly;" It is salable but a good indication there is more of it and maybe better stuff in the rest of the buckets." I got quite excited again as this piece is the largest and cleanest piece I have seen, unfortunately it has not got the strength in colour.

Chris dished up my dinner and I started eating and just said," I am feeling great about everything, by the way I had met Steve Smirnov he owns the Tucker Box Restaurant." Johnny commented, there is a lot of gambling going on there most of the Greek and Slavic Miners go there, I don't like the place at all." "He did invite me to go there and have a drink and a meal sometimes I replied." I finished my dinner, we had a cuppa and I started telling them how I was thinking last night of the famous opal "Morning Star" which was found in 1969 and its supposed value was \$78,000 and it was sold in 1970 for \$1,000,000, it was found just before we arrived in Andamooka. I would have loved to see this huge Stone. Let's be honest is there another precious stone which can create such a desire and anxiety to own it." Look at Diamonds, yes they are very valuable and the sparkle, but I am convinced the Opal is the only Gem which reflects all aspects of Nature from the colours of our beautiful flowers, a Rainbow after a rain, the light blue of the sky, the deep blue of the Oceans and the greens of our lushes forests Now tell me can you see this in a diamond? I don't think so. I really can understand that people get mesmerized by this Gem, I am."

Chris and Johnny agreed, and Chris said let's hope that you find your Star darling." I am convinced we will, and I am sure it will not be that long. See from real hard work with Blood sweat and tears

we more less stream lined our operation, we got everything to make the mining a bit easier, I am sure it will not be a picnic as unfortunately Johnny is still doing most of the work, till I get to the claim afternoons." "That's ok" Johnny said, I will not kill me and it keeps me fit." And I still have most of my money as I am too tired to go out." "Well that's one benefit and I can understand after a long day with pick and shovel who would feel like going out, I am sure you glad the same as me is to get home cleanup have a good feed and just die for the night," I replied. "Amen to that" Johnny answered, but as you said before I will not be too long I am also convinced on that."

"By the way Darling you better get me the stone I kept from Steve, I need it, I like to make a deal with Laszlo, I said to Chris. She went to the Bedroom and brought the opal, which I put with my wallet. "Well Guys you are all nice and clean, I better go and have a shower and hit the sack tomorrow will be an exciting day, actually Chris I will pick you up after the co-op and take you to the claim so you can see the operation." Chris replied "that's great I am looking forward to it." "Johnny can you put the full Buckets in the shed and take only the empty ones I brought from Laszlo, you need the room on the Ute for the compressor, and take some rope so you can secure the machine on the Ute" I told Johnny, he nodded and said "considerate done." "Be at Laszlo's at 7:30 am and pick up everything, ask him to show you how everything works, starting, connecting hoses, lights and Jackhammer operation how to exchange Jack Hammer implements etc. If you find the mullock to hard to shovel away for the parking bay we want to make, than you can use the Jack hammer to loosen it, So don't forget Petrol etc."

Well since everything as organized and everyone fed and clean we called it a night and went to bed. I was laying there and thinking and just can't belief of what happened from the day I decided to become an Opal Miner. We are here now a few months and had some small rewards, and got a reasonable place to leave a few dollars behind us and the most important thing at the moment is the income from my job. As much as I would like to work the claim on a full time and give away the job, I cannot risk quitting the job as I have a family which totally relies on me for support, and I will never ever put them into a situation of uncertainty again. So should we not be able to find what we looking and hoping for, then I would have to sell all the gear stop mining and just work the job and save as much money as possible to get us started in Adelaide. I tossed this thought out immediately, and got my positive attitude back and saw all these beautiful pieces of opal I am holding in my hand and with this picture in my mind I drifted off into a restful sleep.

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February 2013 Gem & Mineral Shows

More shows can be found at <http://www.rockngem.com/show-dates-display/?ShowState=ALL>

1-28—QUARTZSITE, AZ: Wholesale and retail show; Desert Gardens RV Park; Desert Gardens RV Park; 1055 Kuehn St.; Mon. 9-6, Sun. 9-6; free admission; crystals, minerals, rough, polished, jewelry, lapidary equipment; contact Sharon (manager), 1055 Kuehn St., Quartzsite, AZ 85346-2818, (928) 927-6361; e-mail: info@desertgardensrvpark.net; Web site: www.desertgardensrvpark.net

8-10—ROSEVILLE, CA: Wholesale and retail show; Gem Faire Inc.; Placer County Fairgrounds; 800 All America City Blvd.; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$7 (3 days), children (11 and under) free; jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, more than 70 exhibitors, jewelry repair while you shop; contact Allen Van Volkinburgh, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com

15-17—LINCOLN CITY, OR: Annual show; North Lincoln Agate Society; Lincoln City Cultural Center; 540 U.S. 101; Fri. 5-8, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; free admission; contact Laura Joki, Rock Your World LLC, 1423 N.W. Hwy. 101, Lincoln City, OR 97367, (541) 351-8423; e-mail: ljoki@rockyourworldgems.com

15-17—SANTA BARBARA, CA: Wholesale and retail show; Gem Faire Inc.; Earl Warren Showgrounds; 3400 Calle Real; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$7 (3 days), children (11 and under) free; jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, more than 70 exhibitors, jewelry repair while

you shop; contact Allen Van Volkinburgh, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com
 15-24—INDIO, CA: Annual show; San Gorgonio Mineral & Gem Society; Riverside County Fairgrounds; 46-350 Arabia St., Gem & Mineral Bldg. 1; Daily 10-10; adults \$8, seniors \$7, students \$6, children (under 5) free; contact Bert Grisham, 1029 N. 8th St., Banning, CA 92220, (951) 849-1674; e-mail: bert67@verizon.net
 16-17—ANTIOCH, CA: Annual show; Antioch Lapidary Club; CCC Fairgrounds; 1201 W. 10th St.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; adults \$4, children (12 and under), Scouts in uniform, and active military with I.D. free; jewelry, gems, findings, supplies, auction, grab bags, exhibits, hands-on projects for kids; contact Brenda Miguel, (925) 301-6957; e-mail: brenda.miguel@yahoo.com; Web site: www.antiochlapidaryclub.com

22-24—COSTA MESA, CA: Wholesale and retail show; Gem Faire Inc.; OC Fair & Event Center; 88 Fair Dr.; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$7 (3 days), children (11 and under) free; jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, more than 70 exhibitors, jewelry repair while you shop; contact Allen Van Volkinburgh, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com

23-24—BOISE, ID: Annual show; ID Gem Club; Expo ID; 5610 Glenwood; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$3, children (12 and under) \$1.50; contact Charlie Smith, PO Box 1264, Riggins, ID 83549, (208) 628-4002

23-24—SAN FRANCISCO, CA: Retail show; Pacific Crystal Guild; Fort Mason Center; 99 Marina Blvd.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; adults \$6, children free; 38 dealers, minerals, gems, crystals, beads, metaphysical healing tools; contact Jerry Tomlinson, PO Box 1371, Sausalito, CA 94966, (415) 383-7837; e-mail: jerry@crystalfair.com; Web site: www.crystalfair.com

2013 Tucson Gem & Mineral Shows

| Show Name | Address | Dates | Contact | Phone | Website |
|--|---|-----------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| 1820 Oracle Show | 1835 - 1893 North 11th Ave. Tucson, AZ 85705 | Jan. 30-Feb. 17 | Mike New | (520) 622-6633 | www.topgem.com |
| 22nd Street Show | 600 22 nd Street, Tucson AZ 85745 | Jan. 31-Feb. 17 | Christine Coyle | (516) 818-1228 | www.22ndstreetshow.com |
| African Art Village | 1134 S. Farmington Rd. Tucson, AZ 85713 | Feb. 2-17 | Charlotte Mack | (520) 869-7895 | www.africanartvillage.com |
| American Gem Trade Association (AGTA) | 260 S. Church St. Tucson, AZ 85701 | Feb. 5-10 | AGTA | (800) 972-1162 | www.agta.org |
| Arizona Independent Warehouse Show | 2200 East Benson Hwy Tucson, AZ 85714 | Jan. 28-Feb. 16 | | | www.therockwarehouse.com/Tucson_Show.html |
| Arizona Mineral & Fossil Show, Hotel Tucson City Center | 475 N. Granada Ave. Tucson, AZ 85701 | Feb. 2-16 | Martin Zinn Expositions | (505) 867-0425 | www.mzexpos.com |
| Arizona Mineral & Fossil Show, Mineral & Fossil Marketplace | 1333 N. Oracle Tucson, AZ 85705 | Feb. 2-16 | Martin Zinn Expositions | (505) 867-0425 | www.mzexpos.com |
| Arizona Mineral & Fossil Show, Ramada Limited | 665 N. Freeway Ave. Tucson, AZ 85701 | Feb. 2-16 | Martin Zinn Expositions | (505) 867-0425 | www.mzexpos.com |
| A Bead Carnival | 3301 E. Pennsylvania St. Tucson, AZ 85714 | Jan. 14-Feb. 16 | | (520) 907-5124 | www.abeadcarnival.com |
| The Best Bead Show | 2805 E. Ajo Way Tucson, AZ 85713 | Feb. 6-10 | John Iannucci | (610) 909-2674 | www.bestbeadshow.com |
| Clarion Gem & Mineral Show | 750 W. Starr Pass Blvd. Tucson, AZ 85713 | Feb. 1-16 | | | Web site www.gigmshows.com |
| Executive Inn Mineral & Fossil Show | 333 W. Drachman St. Tucson, AZ 85705 | Feb. 2-13 | | (678) 447-1700 | Website www.eimfs.com |
| Fine Minerals International | 450 N. Granada Ave. Tucson, AZ 85701 | Feb. 3-16 | Daniel Trinchillo or Justin Eberhart | (917) 295-7141 (520) 792-8500 | www.finemineral.com |
| Gem & Jewelry Exchange (GJX) | 198 S. Granada Ave. Tucson, AZ 85701 | Feb. 5-10 | Gem & Jewelry Exchange | (520) 882-4200 | www.gjxusa.com |
| Gem & Lapidary Dealers Association (GLDA) | 3800 W. Starr Pass Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85745 | Feb. 4-10 | Claudia Clemente | (301) 795-0345 | www.glda.com |
| Gem & Lapidary Wholesalers, Gem Mall | 4475 S. Country Club Rd. Tucson, AZ 85714 | Feb. 2-15 | Margaret Hopson and Donna Lang | (601) 879-8832 | Website www.glwshows.com |
| Gem & Lapidary Wholesalers, Holiday Inn/Holidome | 4550 S. Palo Verde Rd. Tucson, AZ 85714 | Feb. 7-15 | Margaret Hopson | (601) 879-8832 | www.glwshows.com |
| Globe-X Gem & Mineral Show | 222 S. Freeway Ave. Tucson, AZ | Feb. 1-15 | Piyush Patel | (520) 251-1800 | www.gigmshow.com |
| Granada Avenue Gem and Mineral Show | 350 N. Granada Ave. Tucson, AZ 85701 | Feb. 1-16 | Harvey Siegel | (516) 623-3800 | |
| Granada Show Gallery | 338 N. Granada Ave. Tucson, AZ 85701 | Feb. 2-17 | | | angie@wyodino.org |
| Grant Inn Gem & Mineral Show | 1365 W. Grant Rd. Tucson, AZ 85745 | Feb. 2-15 | Piyush Patel | (520) 251-1800 | www.gigmshows.com |
| Howard Johnson Gem & Mineral Show | 1010 S. Freeway Ave. Tucson, AZ 85745 | Feb. 1-15 | Piyush Patel | (520) 251-1800 | www.gigmshow.com |
| J.O.G.S. International Exhibits | 3750 E. Irvington Rd. Tucson, AZ 85714 | Feb. 1-12 | J.O.G.S. | (213) 629-3030 | www.jogsshow.com |
| Jewelry, Gem and Mineral Expo 2013/Michigan Street | 3200 E. Michigan St. Tucson, AZ 85714 | Feb. 2-17 | | (520) 889-1840 | www.jgmexpo.com |

| Show Name | Address | Dates | Contact | Phone | Website |
|---|---|-------------------|----------------|----------------|--|
| Jewelry, Gem And Mineral Expo 2013/Simpson Street | 601 W. Simpson St. Tucson, AZ 85701 | Feb. 2-17 | | (520) 889-1840 | www.igmetro.com |
| Kino Gem & Mineral Show (Formerly Tucson Electric Park Gem & Mineral Show) | 2500 E. Ajo Way Tucson, AZ 85713 | Feb. 2-17 | A.S. Shows | (520) 468-8383 | www.as-shows.com |
| Madagascar Minerals® Gem Show | 201 W. Lester St. Tucson, AZ 85705 | Jan. 25-Feb. 18 | | (520) 882-8884 | www.madagascaminerals.com |
| Main Avenue Mineral & Fossil Show | 1202 N Main Ave Tucson, AZ 85705 | Jan. 28 - Feb. 12 | | (520) 889-1840 | www.mainavegemshow.com |
| Mineral & Fossil Co-op | 1635 N. Oracle Rd. Tucson, AZ 85705 | Feb. 2-14 | | (310) 322-4043 | |
| Pueblo Gem & Mineral Show | 350 S. Freeway Ave. Tucson, AZ 85745 | Feb. 2-14 | | (310) 586-6816 | www.pueblogemshow.com |
| Rapa River Gem & Mineral Show | 292 S. Freeway Ave. Tucson, AZ 85745 | Feb. 2-17 | Lynn Arriaga | (520) 743-0866 | www.rapariver.com |
| The Rock Show at Kino Sports Complex (Formerly the Tucson Electric Park RV Show) | 2500 E. Ajo Way Tucson, AZ 85713 | Feb. 2-17 | | (800) 983-0133 | www.rockshowtucson.com |
| To Bead True Blue | 445 S. Alvernon Way Tucson, AZ 85711 | Feb. 3-8 | Anna Johnson | (530) 274-2222 | www.tobeadtrueblue.com |
| The Tucson Bead Show at Doubletree Reid Park | 445 S. Alvernon Way Tucson, AZ 85711 | Feb. 9-11 | Anna Johnson | (530) 274-2222 | www.thetucsonbeadshow.com |
| The Tucson Bead Show at Windmill Inn | 4250 N. Campbell Ave. Tucson, AZ 85718 | Feb. 5-10 | | (530) 274-2222 | www.thetucsonbeadshow.com |
| Tucson Gem & Mineral Show™ | 260 S. Church St. Tucson, AZ 85701 | Feb. 14-17 | TGMS | (520) 322-5773 | Web site: www.tgms.org |
| Tucson Showplace | 1530 S. Freeway Ave. Tucson, AZ 85713 | Feb. 1-17 | Veronica Woods | (262) 377-1181 | www.tucsonshowplace.net |
| The Westward Look Show | 245 E. Ina Rd. Tucson, AZ 85704 | Feb. 8-11 | Dave Waisman | (509) 998-5987 | www.westwardminerals.com |
| The Whole Bead Show | 4855 E. Broadway Tucson, AZ 85718 | Feb. 5-10 | | (800) 292-2577 | www.wholebead.com |

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|--|---|
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| <p align="center">TIKKA OPALS</p> <p align="center">E-mail: mattitikka@bigpond.com.au</p> <p align="center">www.tikkaopalsaustralia.com</p> <p align="center">phone: +61-7-55469324 mobile: +61-417-421205</p> | <p align="center">Advertise in this Space!</p> <p align="center">Business Card Size: \$ 5 per month Quarter Page Size: \$10 per month Half Page Size: \$20 per month Full Page Size: \$40 per month</p> <p align="center"><i>Contact:</i> The Opal Express C/O Jim Pisani P.O. Box 4875 Garden Grove, CA 92842-4875 E-mail: editor@opalsociety.org</p> |

American Opal Society Membership Application

| FILL IN APPLICABLE INFORMATION | | DUES / FEES) | AMOUNT PAID |
|---|------------------|--------------|-------------|
| DUES: SELECT ONE | RENEWING MEMBERS | \$30 | |
| | NEW MEMBERS | \$40 | |
| INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIP FEE (All addresses <u>outside</u> of USA) | | \$10 | |
| PRINTED NEWSLETTER FEE (Paper copy postal mailed instead of PDF file by e-mail) | | \$5 | |
| ADDITIONAL BADGES (Your First Badge is <u>free</u> when joining) | | \$10 | |
| TOTAL PAID DUES plus International, Print or Badge Fees if Applicable: | | | |

Please make check or money order payable to "American Opal Society". Mail payment and application to:
American Opal Society; PO BOX 4875; Garden Grove, CA 92842-4875
 An optional, quicker method of payment is via the Internet. To pay, just visit the membership page on our website at http://opalsociety.org/aos_application_by_web.htm and complete the form. You may pay with a Credit Card or via PayPal account. The transaction is completely secure and the AOS never sees your credit card number. The AOS PayPal account is membership@opalsociety.org.

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| NAME | | | |
| BUSINESS NAME | | | |
| ADDRESS | | APT # or PO BOX | |
| CITY | | STATE | |
| ZIP or POSTAL CODE | | COUNTRY (IF OUTSIDE USA) | |
| PHONE - Home () | PHONE - Business () | FAX () | |
| E-MAIL | | | |
| WEBSITE | | | |
| OCCUPATION | | HOBBIES AND INTERESTS | |

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: 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

Please sign here: _____ Date _____

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 E-mail: editor@opalsociety.org

Are Your Dues Due Now?
 PLEASE CHECK YOUR ADDRESS LABEL or NEWSLETTER E-MAIL. There should be a date that shows the current month/year of your membership. If the date is older than the current date, your dues are overdue. A warning will be stated if you are overdue.
 A Renewal Grace Period of two months will be provided. 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

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

**Volume #46 Issue #2
February 2013**

Some Topics In This Issue:

- New Opal & Gem Show Venue Status
- Free Opal And Petrified Wood Collecting in Virgin Valley
- Anaheim Arts Council Annual Fund Raiser
- You Might be a Rockhound If...
- Man Finds 12-Pound Gold Nugget
- Dangerous Dust
- From Rags to Riches Ch. 31 The New Equipment
- 2013 Tucson Gem & Mineral Shows

Important Dates:

- February 7 – Board Meeting:
- February 14 - General Meeting:
Meeting topic to be announced at the meeting.

— GENERAL MEETINGS —

2nd Thurs. of the Month
7:00 pm - 9:00 PM

Garden Grove Civic Women's Club
9501 Chapman Ave.
Garden Grove, CA 92841
(NE corner of Gilbert & Chapman)

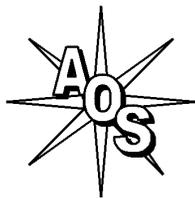
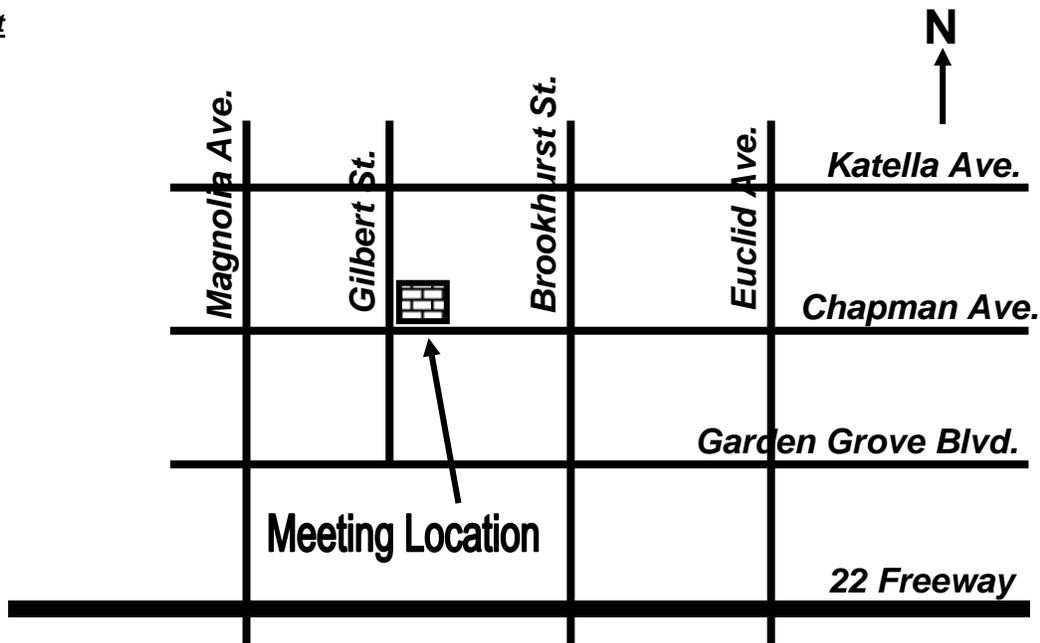
MEETING ACTIVITIES

Opal Cutting, Advice, Guest Speakers,
Slide Shows, Videos, Other Activities

TO:

February 14

To Be Announced



The American Opal Society
<http://OpalSociety.org>

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