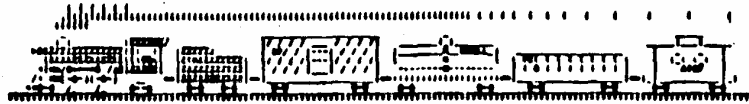




The OPAL EXPRESS

Published monthly by the
American Opal Society...



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May 1986

THE MAY HAPPENINGS OF THE FOUNDING CHAPTER - THURSDAY MAY 8 at 7:30

Unable to make our March meeting, Larry Dobrin will headline this month's gathering with much gusto and much ado about a lot of things, especially California opal. And if you don't know about California opal, by the end of the evening you'll know. And if you DO know about it, by the end of the meeting you'll know MORE about California opal and mining than ever. Larry's going to bring a slide presentation PLUS some lovely samples from Nowak mine in the wilds of Redrock Canyon. So dust off the old pick 'n chisel, 'cause you'll probably get "the bug" to go a'mining.

An added P.S. to the evening's agenda: John Richards will be visiting us from Australia (just happens to be in the neighborhood and thought he'd stop by). He has Australian opal for sale.

So plan BIG on making the second Thursday of May (which happens to fall on the 8th) your OPAL evening and join all us opalholics, as well as all us opalphiles (for those who don't like the word "opalholics") at the Cal-Fed building in Downey. See the map for directions. Refreshments and raffle, too.

THE APRIL MEETING

It was a lot of fun, that's for sure. But then, what else COULD it be with Dick Koch ~t the helm. Dick explained to us about the orientation of opal, how to get the best possible cut from the least amount of fire. Some of the far-out facts are that you CAN get SOMETHING from almost ANY stone if you know how. AND, even plain old potch has some merit. Look for the article in the next issue of The Opal Express and READ ALL ABOUT IT. It's a valuable MUST READ written by Dick Koch.

FLASH! LATE NEWS BULLETIN! The Southern California Faceter's Guild has invited all the members of the American Opal Society to a colored stone Swap. Bring your opal, cut and rough and trade for some fantastic faceted stones. The address is the American Legion Hall, 5938 Parkcrest Ave. Long Beach. At the intersection of Carson and Woodruff. The date will be July 23, 1986. More information next month.

***** BOARD REPORT *****

The April meeting of the Board of Directors was held once again at the Pattee's residence. This meeting was very quiet and adjourned early.

1. The secretary's minutes and the treasurers report were submitted and accepted.
2. The By-Laws ballots were counted and were accepted by the members by an overwhelming majority.
3. There was discussion and a unanimous vote to split the general ledger and assets between the Corporation and Founding Chapter.
4. Discussion of Standing Rules that need to be written for the Corporation. If anyone has any suggestions, please contact one of the officers on the Board of Directors.

Editor's Note: The Board of Directors meetings are open to all society members in good standing. The meetings are at 7:30 P.M. on the third Thursday of every month at the Pattee's residence. Call 213-425-2426 for directions.

WE GET LETTERS

Attn: Editor, The Opal Express:

As I like to keep my copies of The Opal Express intact, I would like to suggest that items that need to be cut out and mailed be put on the address page so that information in articles are left intact. I know at times this will be difficult in order to keep the weight of the newsletter within the ounce.

Sincerely,

Phyllis A. Brouse

Thank you Phyllis for a good suggestion. We will keep this in mind for future editions. Editor.

The Opal Express Staff
Editor-in-Chief: Colleen Guerrette
Asst. Editor: Andy Guerrette
Printing & Distribution:
Jewett & Dorothea Pattee
Contributing Editor: Jewett Pattee

CRANSTON SEEKS TO LOCK UP MORE DESERT

Recently I ran across an article in an exchange bulletin and thought every rock hound should be aware of it. Senator Cranston wrote a bill 3-2061, that was presented on Feb. 7, 1986 entitled THE CALIF. DESERT PROTECTION ACT OF 1986. Because this bill has the support of almost every environmental group, including the powerful Sierra Club, it has been predicted that without a united opposition it could be signed into law as early as 6 months from now. According to the Western Mining Council, if this bill becomes law, it will have the largest negative impact in California history. Many hundreds of rich mines and hot mining areas will be swept away (including rockhounding areas) into the National Park System where mining and rockhunting are not allowed.

The bill affects 9.4 million acres of Calif. Desert in Riverside, San Bernardino, Imperial, Inyo, and Mono Counties. S-2061. proposes:

1. Creates 81 "instant" wildernesses totaling 4.48 million acres... twice the 2.1 million under BLM NO ROCKHOUNDS...
2. Transfers the 1.5 million acre East Mojave Scenic Area from BLM to the Natl. Park Service with Park status, half of the huge area will become 'instant' wilderness. It includes the Granite, Providence, New York, Ivanpaw, Hackberry and Piute Mts.; Lanfair Valley, Devils playground, and Mojave Sink. In Park Stays, prospecting, rockhounding, mining, drilling are strictly forbidden. Wilderness status forbids roads and vehicles. •NO ROCKHOUNDING...
3. Death Valley, rich in mineral sources, would be elevated to Park Status. Its size would be enlarged from 2.1 million to 3.4 million acres with inclusion of BLM lands on the West and East. 94% would be existing and Instant Wilderness. NO ROCKHOUNDING....
4. Joshua Tree Nat]. Monument would be "elevated" to Park Status. It ~u Increase from 560,000 to 805,000 acres of BLM lands on the Southwest and Southeast. Half of added lands, 133,000 acres, would become 'instant' Wilderness, making Joshua Tree almost totally Wilderness. NO ROCKHOUNDING....
5. Transfers 20,000 acres of Last Chance Cyn. to Red. Rock State Parke NO ROCKHOUNDING.....

As bad as BLM's Calif. Desert Use Plan is for multi-recreation use of Public lands, Cranston's bill is devastatingly worse.

WRITE TO: Se~. Cranston, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC, 20510 and tell him politely how you feel about his bill S-2061

WRITE TO: Sen. Pete Wilson, U.S. Senate and say you expect him to oppose Cranston's bill 2-2061

WRITE TO: your member of the House of Reps, Wash..~ DC, 20006 and ask him to oppose Cranston's bill 2-2061

WRITE TO: President Reagan, White House, Wash. DC, 20006 and advise him that Cranston's Calif. Desert Protection Act of 1986 is not good for Calif. and to ignore the advice of William Penn Mott, Director of the National Park Service.....

The year keeps' marching on and things have settled into a "nice" routine. Deadlines come and go and we have just passed our first deadline on April 30. This was the cutoff date for the first payment for the November show. All dealers who plan to be there should have sent their signed contract in to us and now we can start assigning tables. For those of you who haven't done so yet, it is still not too late to get a good spot in the show.



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Handy Hints from Joe Huddle

Vehicle Towing Tips

Are you headed for an opal mine dig? If so consider:

1. Size of towing vehicle motor
2. Heavy duty alternator, fan and battery
3. Axle ratio of vehicle
4. Size and type of tire.
5. Type of trailer hookup
6. C.B. hookup availability
7. The best vehicle price (new or used)
8. Type of transmission and brakes
9. Best vehicle financing available

SUMMARY: Save \$ and headaches later by a little research when in the market for any type of vehicle.

Car Starter Replacement

Wisdom says to buy the same numbered starter if you want a good replacement.

Good Magazines to Read

"TRAILER LIFE"
"MOTORHOME"



KCB & ASSOCIATES

FINE QUALITY PEARLS
AMERICAN NATURAL FRESHWATER PEARLS
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DIGGING FOR FIRE OPAL IN VIRGIN VALLEY, NEVADA

A trip to the opal fields in Virgin Valley is indeed a wonderful way to spend a weekend, a week or even longer. There are some things that the traveler should know, however, to make it more fun. We have prepared this brochure to help you plan your trip.

It should be remembered that you are going into some fairly wild country. There are no gas stations around the next bend in the road, therefore you gas up in Cedarville, CA, or in Denio, NV, or in Lakeview, OR. It is always a good idea to carry some extra gas and water in country like this. There is good water, and lots of it in Virgin Valley at the CCC Camp. You can camp there in trailers, tents and etc., there are no motels in the Valley. The closest motel is in Denio. The Rainbow Ridge Mine is 35 miles from Denio, NV. Many people drive back and forth each day or if you wish to you can camp at the CCC Camp. This is just five miles from the Rainbow Ridge Mine. All of the highways, except the one coming in from Cedarville, CA are paved. Highway 140 is all paved from Winnemucca, NV to Lakeview, OR. The last seven and half miles after leaving 140 coming to the mine are not paved. This is gravel and dirt. All you have to do is take it slow and you can make it easily. We have had every type of car at the mine, but we suggest that if you are pulling a house trailer that you leave it at the CCC Camp. Signs are our to guide you the last seven and half miles.

Please study the map. Not all is to scale, but if you follow it, you will have no difficulty getting to Virgin Valley. The Valley is some 28 miles from Denio, NV. It is 95 miles from Lakeview, OR. Virgin Valley is in the Charles Sheldon Antelope Range, and no shooting is allowed. The CCC Camp is two and a half miles after turning off the main road (Highway 140). You can camp there. The Rainbow Ridge Mine is some five miles further South. Most people like to camp at the CCC Camp as there is water here and even a shower to clean off some of the dust.

We have only tailings digging. Tailings are the material that has been dug out to the mine in the past and put out in the dumps to dry out and break down the clods of clay that the opals come in. So long as there are clods of clay, there is a chance that there are opals in them. The rates for digging in the tailings are \$20.00 per day, no half day rates, but children 8 to 13 will be half price. (Everyone on the tailings must pay to be there.)

Late news: I talked to Mrs. Hodson today and she gave me an update. They have opened up the old Rainbow Ridge diggings and have increased the amount of material available for noodling many times over. Some large and valuable pieces have been found in these tailings. Most of the people who were there last year did very well and many returned to dig a second or third day. New tailings will be brought to the digging area every two days or so. D.P.

We can't say what you will find. Part is luck and part is how much time you care to put into combing or noodling the tailings. We do say that most people get more than their moneys worth. It should be remembered that you are looking for fire opal, a precious stone, and a little piece of this can be worth a lot of money. Opal is found in only a few places on this earth. It is highly prized by many people and is without a doubt the most beautiful of all gemstones. The Nevada opal is some of the finest, if not the very finest, to

be found on this earth. True, it has its cracking problems, but so does all opal no matter where it comes from. We sell most of our opal as specimens, but have cut many, many really fine gem stones. Some- selling for \$100 per carat and more.

The Rainbow Ridge Opal Mine will be open to the public from the Memorial Day weekend till the middle of October. WE ARE CLOSED WEDNESDAYS. This years dates are May 24 to October 15.

June is usually a cooler month than July, with some rainfall possible. July and August are the warmest months. September is good with sunny days. The nights are cool throughout the season. For tools you need a shovel, small sharp pick and gloves are a good idea.

We will be most happy to see you in Virgin Valley, and know that you will have the time of your life. Remember, we are closed Wednesdays, and you must be at Rainbow Ridge Nine before 10 AM.

Prior to May 26th our address is as follows:

G. Keith Hodson
 Hodson's of Scottsdale, Inc.
 7116 First Avenue
 Scottsdale, AZ 85251
 (602) 945-2262

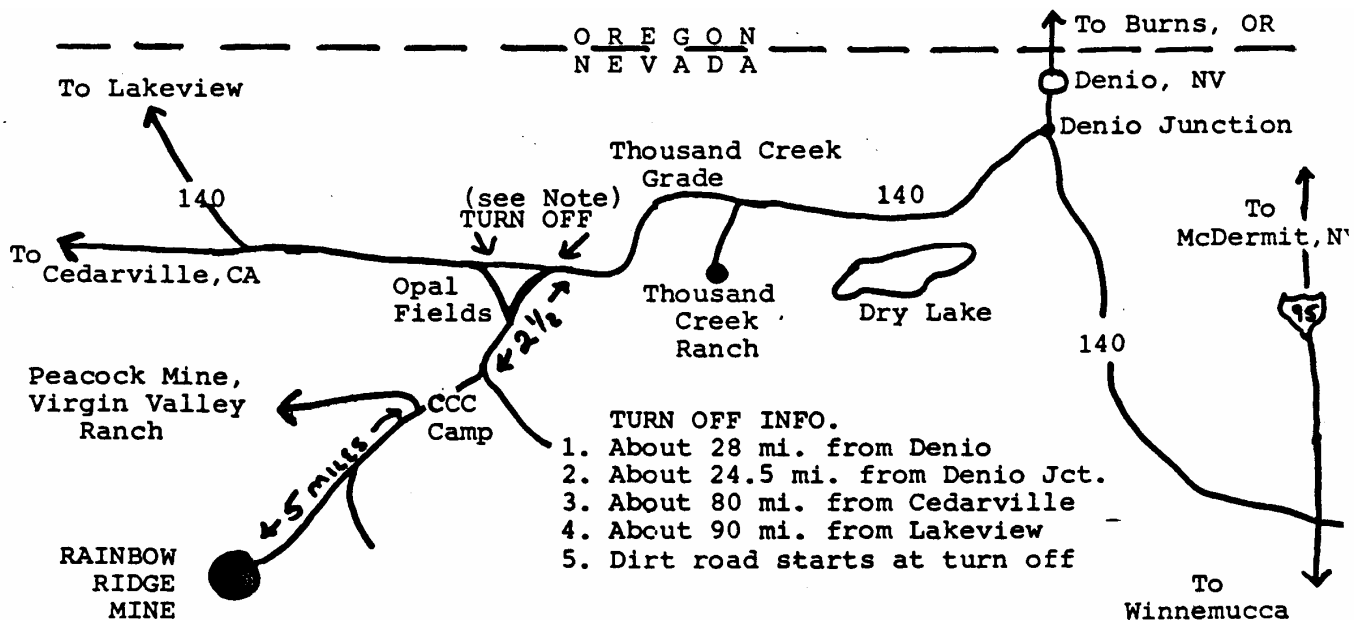
From May 26th thru October send your letters to the following:

G. Keith Hodson
 Rainbow Ridge Opal Nine
 Denio, NV 89404
 (702) 941-0270

MAP TO OPAL FIELDS

DRY COUNTRY, GOOD IDEA TO CARRY DRINKING WATER AND EXTRA GASOLINE

Coming into Virgin Valley from the Denio route you have black top roads all the way to the turn off to Virgin Valley. From the turn off to the Rainbow Ridge Nine is just 7½ miles of gravel road. Coming from Cedarville, CA you have gravel from the Nevada line to about 12 miles from the turn off to the mine. Route 140 thru to Lakeview, OR is blacktop. After turning off 140 into Virgin Valley you have gravel roads, but only 7½ miles and any car can travel them with moderate caution.



Caring and Sharing

In Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy to the family of John Hockenbrocht, who passed away on March 29 of a heart attack. John was among our newest members and resided in Signal Hill.

The "Get Well" Wishes....

Sorry to hear of Jake Schmidt's recent back sprain. He was in traction for a while, and wife Rita reports he's better and hopes to be up and around and back at the meetings soon.

Board member Roy Savage has been in intensive care at Bellwood General Hospital in Bellflower and undergoing tests for an undetermined illness. We all wish Roy the best.

The meetings haven't been quite the same lately without Bill Judd. It seems he's been down with the flu, and we certainly hope to see him up and about again.



DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS

Jewett Pattee, President, 213-425-2426	Ross Stambler, 213-693-6898
Dick Koch, 1st VP, 213-927-4372	Elaine Milliron, 213-632-9965
Bill Judd, 2nd VP, 213-923-4663	Harold Umberson, 213-693-7380
Andy Guerrette, Treas., 714-734-7484	Joe Vezeau, 714-523-1318
Dorothea Pattee, Sec., 213-425-2426	
Roy Savage, 213-867-4336	Larry Dobrin, 213-305-7674

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