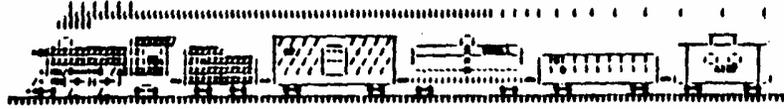




# The OPAL EXPRESS

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American Opal Society...



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All over America antique and collectible jewelry can be found at auctions, shows, shops, dealers spaces in malls, yard sales and flea markets, and in the possession of private collectors. Also, I have a very strong suspicion that the most interesting and valuable pieces are yet to be found. . . in someone's "junk box" stashed away just waiting to be taken out, cleaned up, repaired a little and identified. You know what I'm talking about don't you?

## LEARNING THE HARD WAY

My interest and beginning in the antique and collectible jewelry field began like a bolt from the blue! My best friend was taking me to lunch for my birthday and she arrived wearing a lovely sterling bracelet set with five large cabochon amethysts she had found at an antique mall at a "bargain" price of \$250.00! ~! She didn't know and I certainly couldn't tell her that I had sold one just like it at a "yard sale" for 25~! Of course mine had been tarnished, the clasp was not working and one of the stones (which I thought was glass) was a little loose! I know now that twenty dollars and a little research would have put my bracelet in perfect condition and I would now own a lovely piece of old jewelry!

Since prehistoric man began adorning himself and his clothing, the jewelry of all peoples have told a story of past cultures and times. Primitive man used stone, bone, wood, feathers and animal skins. Bronze was the first metal to be used and some of the jewelry of the Bronze Age can be likened and recognized in styles through the centuries. The jewelry of ancient Greece, Italy, the Orient, Egypt, Mongolia, Persia, Africa and India all contributed to the enrichment and improvement in the development of jewelry as we know it today. The best pieces of the ancients are today available for appreciation primarily in our museums, where we can all enjoy them, and where our designers can seek inspiration.

...Excerpt from "Historical Overview: Antique & Collectible Jewelry," by Jean Zamot, Graduate Gemologist, GIA Alumni, La Habra, CA...

...Who also happens to be our most esteemed guest speaker at our June meeting. Mark your calendar for Thursday, June 12, at 7:30 p.m. at our meeting place in Downey, 8211 E. Firestone. BRING YOUR ANTIQUE JEWELRY to the meeting. Jean will do gem identification., as well as take us on a tour through ancient times, through the various periods of history and the jewelry and customs which played a large role in those times. The best things really are free...

# 2

## MAY'S MEETING...

.was enjoyed tremendously by all who attended.. thanks to John Richards, who was visiting the area from Australia. John entertained us with a video tape about our favorite topic (opal), and about mining in Australia, how the miners live and their methods of mining, past and present. The many pictures of fabulous black opals from Lightning Ridge up close was simply breathtaking!! Larry Dobrin again was not able to make the May meeting due to conflict of scheduling dates. However, he has promised to give his program on California opal mining at another date later this year.

## COMING UP...

Don't forget the invitation of the Faceters Guild of Southern California to a colored stone swap on July 23. Bring your rough or cut opal to trade. The members of the faceters guild do things with gemstone rough that is unbelievable to someone who is used to seeing Ho Hum standard of native cut stones from the Far East.

The address is 5938 Parkcrest Ave., Long Beach. At the intersection of Carson C Woodruff, in the American Legion Hall.

Carson

Parkcrest

## SHOW BIZ 1986 — PART 6

The month of June is here and we are about to embark upon one of the biggest advertising campaigns in AOS history. This will commence with an interview and professional write-up of our President and the Society by the Anaheim Convention Center's Advertising Department. We will then use the camera ready article to start off the blitz. Following that we will begin to make ourselves known to the local media, i.e. newspapers, radio, and TV with follow-up ads and articles. I believe that John Rail viii have his work cut out for him.

## ORIENTING COLOR

## ROUGH STONES OR BROKEN AND RECUT STONES

In cutting rough or any subsequent stones, the manner in which the light refracts from that stone is the paramount importance on your consideration for cutting or re-cutting. (Refract - to break up, change the white light into the rainbow of colors we admire in opal.)

If the light most readily seen is refracting the most light in one direction, then no other consideration should be made.

If there are two or more refractive indexes of equal or very close values, then the eye of the beholder, or the grinder, is now the greatest of importance to then consider. This means, is the pinfire the first value chosen, or the rolling flash of a somewhat greater display of color? Is there side flash, with pinfire, or just something undefinable, yet there is some color?

These varying conditions are then to be carefully studied before any further grinding should be done. Does the stone only flash or show color in bright sunlight? Or does it show pleasant colors in subdued and indirect light? A very important consideration on the author's part is, if there is a fairly bright light source, does the stone show any color in the shadow of your hand or under the work bench or table? If the answer is yes then grind the top to that color band most prominent. If there is just a thin band of side flash, then consider many little stones of high quality color. There are many great looking finished stones and rings that support this statement.

Too many of us in this society have not considered quality as the prime requisite for a finished stone, but say to ourselves, "Gee, I don't want to lose all this stone I have purchased with my last expendable dollar, so I'll just leave a little of this potch for a larger stone," even though the stone won't be of greater quality, but will be a greater stone? We kid ourselves as society members for falling into that great fallacy, "BIGGER IS ALWAYS BETTER."

This is what the society should be teaching at all times. If you have a poor stone, treat it as such, don't whimper about how you tried to save it, it wasn't there in the first place and it isn't going to be there in the second place after you have put a lot of sweat and tears into your grinding project. That potch is still potch no matter how you look at it. This does not include Boulder opal which uses the matrix or Iron Stone to hold some very interesting color bands together, yet even so, there are those that use too much Iron Stone to say that it weighs this much more for a selling price.

As the Aussies say, when you flog a stone, "try to sell it," the bigger mug stone, "cheap unprofitable style stone," the more you can get for it. That is where all the cheap, inexpensive stones get their beginnings and proliferate as the great Australian Gemstone.

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## Orienting Color (Continued)

We fall into this trap, because most of us would like to own a little opal, but don't have the wherewithal to purchase and admire the most precious of opal, so buy the mug stones to say, "I have an opal." In reality, is this truly appreciating opal, or are we kidding ourselves about what we really enjoy?

This brings me to this point, if you have a lot of money and can enjoy your very own gemstone in opal, then do so. If you are an opalhollic, such as I am, then it is to your whims and pocket book you owe your loyalty.

Grinding opal from an unknown knobby, or a broken piece of potch is an unknown value at best. If that stone has an exposed area, then you at least have a starting point. If not, then you start on one quadrant, then to the next looking for a color band. Here is where a lot of inexperienced grinders go awry. It is so easy to see some color, and never really get the full potential of a stone.

Conversely, I have seen many a stone destroyed by going too fast and going right on through a stone's color band. I have gotten the jitters and stopped before the true potential was brought out. This was found out when a chip or flaw was discovered and subsequent grinding and polishing took place.

We are all to some degree guilty of not letting that rolling flash go, leaving a small patch of pinfire off to the side on a better stone if it was removed.

Therefore, all stones should be looked at as if it could, or should, become two or more stones, ranging from fantastic for that 6 mm small intense stone to that So-so 10 mm or baroque stone.

Color and how you see it will govern your cutting and polishing. It will also dictate the size of stone or stones, and the shape it might take to keep the best and most intense part of the color pattern. I have intentionally cut a stone in half to get matching pairs of earrings, and a ring out of one stone. Some were of necessity small, some came out in surprising shapes when the true colors started to emerge when the stone was cut for quality, not quantity.

Side Flash--a very disturbing word to me. Definition -- a small band of color with a VERY intense FLASH, but when ground and polished at ninety degrees to that band often turns out to be very dull on the 90-degree side or side or with fleeting splotchy color patterns that no way resemble the intensity to what was seen on the side in a square cut fashion. Very few and rare stones have enough color throughout to be cut in any way or fashion.. If you ever come through with a blind spot in your purchased rough that proves to be so intense a color as to be able to cut it at any angle or face, enjoy it to the fullest, for you have just pulled a one-in-a-million shot at beating a dealer at his own game.

Without being able to look at your stone through these pages, it will be a great pleasure to see you at the next or any other meeting to see if we can best orient that color band or area to its best potential.

Best Regards,

Dick Koch, 1st V.P.



*American Opal  
Society, Inc.*

P.O. BOX 3895  
DOWNEY, CALIFORNIA 90242

_____	DENOTES FULL PAGE	\$40.00 per month
-----	DENOTES HALF PAGE	\$20.00 per month
.....	DENOTES QUARTER PAGE	\$10.00 per month
-----	DENOTES BUSINESS CARD SIZE	\$5.00 per month

We have received several requests for advertising space in our OPAL EXPRESS and have prepared this information sheet in response.~ We are including this page in our June issue so our dealer members may have these guidelines as to space and prices. As in the past, we will continue to carry personal ads from our members (related to selling or swapping equipment, rough, etc.) free of charge.

All copy must reach the P.O. Box in Downey by the third Thursday of the month preceding issue in which it will appear. Copy received after the deadline will be printed the following month unless we receive other instructions.

**EMERALD CUTS (Shape n° 1)**

5 x 3 millimeters	6 x 4	7 x 5	7.5 x 5	7 x 5.5	7.5 x 5.5	8 x 6	8.5 x 6.5	9 x 7	10 x 8	11 x 9	11 x 9	12 x 10	15 x 11
0.21	0.52	0.88	0.99	1.10	1.20	1.45	1.62	2.13	2.95	4.05	5.20	5.50	8.65
Carat													

**OCTAGONS (Shape n° 2)**

3 x 3 millimeters	4 x 4	5 x 5	6 x 6	6.5 x 6.5	7 x 7	7.5 x 7.5	8 x 8
0.15	0.33	0.63	0.94	1.15	1.50	1.90	2.18
Carat							

**SQUARE CUTS (Sharp corners) (Shape n° 3)**

2.5 x 2.5 millimeters	3 x 3	4 x 4	5 x 5	6 x 6	7 x 7
0.08	0.12	0.33	0.60	1.05	1.70
Carat					

**ROUNDS (Shape n° 4)**

2.5	2.75	3	3.5	4	4.5	5	5.5	6	6.25	6.50	7	7.50	8	9	10
0.06	0.07	0.1	0.17	0.25	0.35	0.55	0.7	0.9	1.00	1.15	1.50	1.70	2.00	3.00	4.00
Carat															

**PEAR SHAPES (Shape n° 5)**

5 x 3.25	6 x 4	7 x 5	7.5 x 5	7.5 x 5.25	9 x 6	10.5 x 7	12 x 8	13.5 x 9	18 x 9.5	15 x 10	18.5 x 13
0.21	0.40	0.70	0.80	0.86	1.35	2.00	2.50	3.70	5.50	4.90	11.50
Carat											

**OVAL SHAPES (Shape n° 6)**

5 x 3	6 x 4	6.5 x 4.5	7 x 5	7.5 x 5.5	8 x 6	8.5 x 6.5	9 x 7	10 x 8	11 x 9	12 x 10
0.22	0.40	0.60	0.80	0.97	1.20	1.50	1.80	2.60	3.60	4.60
Carat										

**MARQUISE SHAPES (Shape n° 7)**

4 x 2.5	5 x 2.5	5 x 3	6 x 3	6.5 x 3.5	6 x 4	8 x 4	9 x 4.5	10 x 5	12 x 6	14 x 7	15 x 7.5	16 x 8
0.08	0.13	0.17	0.19	0.30	0.38	0.50	0.70	0.95	1.70	2.50	3.30	4.00
Carat												

**OPAL GAUGE (black or white)**

**OVAL CABOCHONS (Shape n° 8)**

8 x 6 millimeters	9 x 7	10 x 8	11 x 9	12 x 10
h27	h28	h29	h3	h32
0.75	1.00	1.25	1.50	2.00
h: approximate height of the stone in millimeters				

The May Board meeting was held on the 15th of the month at the Pattee's residence. The president presented a candidate for the Board to replace Brian Franks and we would like to welcome Dolores Proulx as our newest board member.

1. The secretary's minutes and the treasurers report were submitted and accepted.
2. A motion was made to buy new skirting for this years show since quite a few dealers have opted for the Society to provide skirting.
3. Discussion about the Opal Evaluation Kits and requested that Brian Franks attend the June board meeting to explain the kits.
4. Discussion about securing liability insurance for the show.
5. Suggestion that the corporation begin having seminars but not during the show.
6. 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.

Editors 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 Pattees residence. Call 213-425-2426 for directions.

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