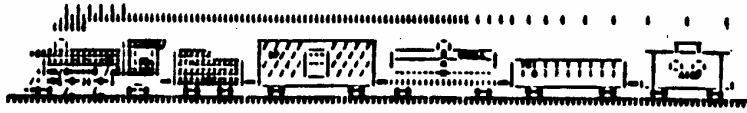




The OPAL EXPRESS

Published monthly by the
American Opal Society...



VOLUME 20
NUMBER 7
JULY 1988

OPAL BIRTHSTONE FOR JULY IS RED OPAL--alternate is Triplet Opal.

This concludes our opal birthstones chart. The chart was prepared by Idaho Opal Corporation in answer to the age old cry, "I can't wear opal because it isn't my birthstone."

PRESIDENT'S PAGE-----Our show is now only two month's away. Please make plans to attend, bring your friends and we will make this the best show yet.

No other show will have as much opal offered for sale, in rough form, cut stones and finished jewelry. There will be other gemstones, findings and demonstrations.

Dick Koch, our Show Chairman, is working long and hard to make this show our greatest. Give him your help; volunteer some of your time to help setting up and tearing down, or acting as host or hostess. We can use help on the Silent Auction and Chapter members are needed to help man their booths.

The bargains in opal offered at our show once a year are available nowhere else at any time.

"Now is the time for all good opalophiles to come to the aid of the party!"

ATTENTION! CALLING ALL JEWELRY DESIGNERS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The Jewelry Design Contest for members only will be held again this year. Get your pieces ready. Entry instructions and application will be published next month.

ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER NEWS!!!!!!----Brian Franks, Pres. 714-857-2743

The Orange County Chapter of the American Opal Society will meet Tuesday, July 19th, 7:30 pm at the College Park Clubhouse in Irvine. (See map on back.) Watch for postcard giving details of the program. Don't forget to stop by the Orange County Fair to see the display case the group entered. Thanks to John Hall for rounding up the opal and to Noel Lamkin for making labels and arranging the case. The Fair runs from July 7-17, 10:00 am to 11:00 pm each day.

!!!! NEWS FROM THE FOUNDING CHAPTER !!!!!

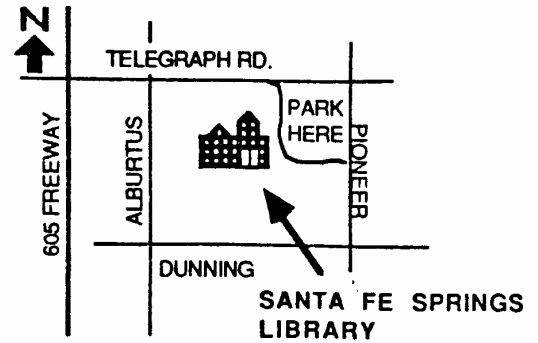
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Downey, CA 90242

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Bobbie Gledhill, Joan Goodsir, Leonard Goodsir, Nancy Means,
Edith Ostrander, Harold Umberson, Sue Umberson
Honorary Lifetime Members, Bill and Della Judd

General Meetings held on the 2nd Thursday at 7:30 PM in the Santa Fe Springs Library, 11700 Telegraph Rd., Santa Fe Springs. See Map.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Anyone who would like to place display items in cases at the Orange County Jubilee of Gems, to be held at the Orange County Fairgrounds in August should contact Joe Vezeau (714-521-6147) for details. Let's have a good representation, folks.

On a more personal note for our group, congratulations to Harold Umberson who received a plaque to recognize his outstanding contribution as President of the 1986-1987 year. And, also news of another popular member: Edith Ostrander has been hospitalized at Whittier Presbyterian Hospital with possible meningitis. Cards to her home at 12547 McGee Dr., Whittier, 90605 would be brought to her by her daughter. Wish you well quick, Edith.

Dick Koch has been keeping us up to date on Australian doings. He further tells us the rough news from down under is that their recent policy is to maximize profits by cutting all their own stones. That means no "ruff" for us kids up here to play with.

October will be not only the birthstone month of our (you know what) favorite gemstone, but also the time we occupy the Santa Fe Springs Library meeting place lock-safe display cases. They have chosen us for this October month, and it's a great opportunity for we opalholics to educate the public regarding our fascination with opals. Therefore, start thinking NOW about what you have in the way of stones, literature, pictures, --anything pertinent to the mining, cutting, setting, and just downright enjoyment of our opals.

Many thanks to Georgia Smith for the impromptu sharing of her Pep-O-Mints when regular refreshments didn't arrive. While they were shaped like donuts and just as sweet, Joe says he will for sure bring a cake next time -- and everyone better come and have some, or it's back to Life Savers!

Joe Vezeau, President of Founding Chapter.

Our speaker was Joe Vezenu, who gave an extremely informative talk on how to gold-plate wood or other natural objects. He explained the "nuts and bolts" procedure to take a numdane object and transform it with a coat of real gold. It was a very interesting talk, and illustrated with many fine examples.

Our next meeting is a light-hearted departure from our usual instructional format. We've talked Bobbie Gledhill into running a Bingo Game for us. First we get into the recreational mood with an old fashioned Pot Luck Dinner, and then relax with some rounds of Bingo. FUN! EASY! JUST REMEMREI?:

If your name starts with:

- A thru I -- bring a casserole or hors d'ouvres*
- J thru R -- bring veges*
- S thru Z -- bring dessert*

ALSO, DON'T FORGET TO BRING:

*Your own table service (plate, silverware, etc.)
AND a prize of some sort to contribute to the Bingo table.
SEE YA THERE -- AND I'LL BET YOU WIN SOMETHING!*

BOARD REPORT

As usual the main topic of discussion at the June Board Meeting was the show. Richard Koch, Show Chairman, reported the following dealers will be present:

Jerry D. Liner—Long Beach, Ca.
La Roche International--Long Beach, Ca.
Nadery's Gems and Design Accessories--La Habra, Ca.
Opals by Churchill—Huntington Beach, Ca.
The Gem Wizard—No. Hollywood, Ca.
Wire Art Jewelry—Santa Maria, Ca.
Rimm, Inc.--Honolulu, HI.
The House of Tibara—Clovis, Ca.
Oxy Gems—Coalinga, CA.
Al's Opal Imports—San Diego CA 92105
Evan's Supreme Gems—Spring Valley, CA
The Rushs--Moreno Valley, CA
Acme Gems—San Pedro, Ca.
Phillip Pearl—Lightning Ridge, Australia
Royal Crest—Irvine, CA
Western Opal Corporation--Los Angeles, CA
The Rigors--Hayward, CA
Rod Griffin—Edgecliff, NSW, Australia
Leonard Silverman & Co.—Redding, CA
The Clam Shell—San Diego, CA
Alice's Gems—Harbor City, CA
Creative Rainbows—Long Beach, CA
Schulz and Wu--Montebello, CA
The Hendricks--Arleta, CA

Several other contracts have just been sent out. We will update this list next month.

Other items on the agenda were the possibility of a dues increase due to increased postage and printing expense. This subject was set aside in order to get more input from our members, both Chapter and Members-at Large. (Ed. Note; Please write to us concerning your ideas and suggestions on the above topic or any other concerns you may have.)
Another subject which was brought up was the possibility of obtaining a shop to be used to teach opal cutting and holding educational seminars.

Next month's Board Meeting will be held Thursday, July 28th, 7:30 pm at the usual place. All agenda items must be submitted at least seven days before the meeting.

A Classification and Description Of Australian Opal

CLASSIFICATION:

Opal as sold to the customer:

1. Solids
2. Doublets and triplets
3. Chip jewellery

Sub-groups based on main colour in pattern:

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| Red | Green |
| Orange | Blue |

Types of opal:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Common opal or potch—plain colour only. | 2. Precious opal—has attractive colour pattern |
|--|--|

Types of Potch:

- I. Black and blue
2. White
3. Grey
4. Clear
5. Amber

Sub-groups based on pattern:

- I. Harlequin
2. Pinfire
3. Broad flash
4. Rolling flash
5. Sunflash
6. Liquid opal
7. Eye opal
8. Others

Basic classification of precious opal based of potch background:

- I. Black and semi-black opal—black or blue potch background
2. White opal—white potch background
3. Grey opal—grey potch background
4. Jelly and crystal opal—clear potch background
5. Amber opal—amber potch background

Sub-groups based on natural formation:

- I. Nobby opal
2. Seam and vertical opal
3. Matrix associated with seam and vertical opal
4. Boulder opal
5. Queensland opal matrix
6. Opalised wood
7. Opalised shells, etc.

The chart above was taken from IN SEARCH OF OPAL by Kalokerinos

Excerpt from the CURIOUS LORE OF PRECIOUS STONES, by George Frederick Kunz.

"A possible explanation of the superstitious dread the opal used to excite some time ago may be found in the fact that lapidaries and gem-setters to whom opals were entrusted were sometimes so unfortunate as to fracture them in the process of cutting or setting. This was frequently due to no fault on the part of the cutters or setters, but was owing to the natural brittleness of the opal. As such workmen are responsible to the owners for any injury to the gems, they would soon acquire a prejudice against opals, and would come to regard them as unlucky stones. Very widespread superstitions have no better foundation than this, for the original cause, sometimes a quite rational one, is soon lost sight of and popular fantasy suggests something entirely different and better calculated to appeal to the imagination."

THE BIRTH OF AN OPAL
(Dedicated to the late Ernest C. Sherman)

From time immemorial, whenever a rainbow appeared in the sky in Australia, the fairies snipped a piece from each end. Then came the thought of how to keep these treasures of wondrous colours safe from greedy, Covetous man. Surely there was no safer hiding-place than in the rocks deep down in mother earth.

But here the fairies themselves might so easily lose trace of their treasures, since they could return for them by night only. So, by alchemy known to the fairies only, they wrapped these tissues of unbelievably lovely and gloriously blended colours around unquenchable sparks of fire, thus making, as it were, lamps with red, green, blue, yellow, and mauve flames to reveal these secret places, within which, with every movement, the fire glows and flames up in the heart of this colour, and behold—an Opal was born.

Leila C. Redshaw

AUSTRALIAN OPALS WEIGHT CONVERSION CHART							
Round		Marquise		Heartshape		Oval	
Size (mm)	pc/ct	Size (mm)	pc/ct	Size (mm)	pc/ct	Size (mm)	pc/ct
1.5	75.0	4x2	0.05	4x4	0.30	5x3	0.15
2.0	50.0	6x3	0.18	5x5	0.20	6x4	0.25
2.5	25.0	8x4	0.35	6x6	0.40	7x5	0.45
3.0	14.0	10x5	0.60	7x7	0.70	8x6	0.75
3.5	10.0	12x6	1.00	8x8	0.10	9x7	1.00
4.0	7.0	Pearshape		Opal Bead		10x8	1.50
4.5	4.0	5x3	0.15	3.0	0.15	11x9	2.00
5.0	3.0	6x4	0.25	3.5	0.25	12x10	2.50
5.5	2.2	7x5	0.40	4.0	0.35	14x10	3.50
6.0	2.0	8x5	0.50	4.5	0.50	14x12	4.20
6.5	1.5	8x6	0.70	5.0	0.70	16x14	6.00
7.0	1.2	9x6	0.80	6.0	1.20	18x13	7.00

TABLE OF EQUIVALENT WEIGHTS																	
TROY OZ.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10.00oz. Tr						
AVOIR OZ.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10.97 oz. Av.					
CARATS	0	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000	1100	1200	1300	1400	1500	1555.17Ct.
GRAMS	0	25	50	75	100	125	150	175	200	225	250	275	300	311.034 Gm.			
PENNY-WEIGHTS	0	25	50	75	100	125	150	175	200.00 Dwt.								
GRAINS	0	300	600	900	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400	2700	3000	3300	3600	3900	4200	4500	4800 Gr.
PEARL GRAINS	0	500	1000	1500	2000	2500	3000	3500	4000	4500	5000	5500	6000	6220.68 P.Gr.			
OLD ENGL. CTS.	0	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000	1100	1200	1300	1400	1500	1515.0 O.E.Ct.

To convert one weight to another simply connect with a vertical line.

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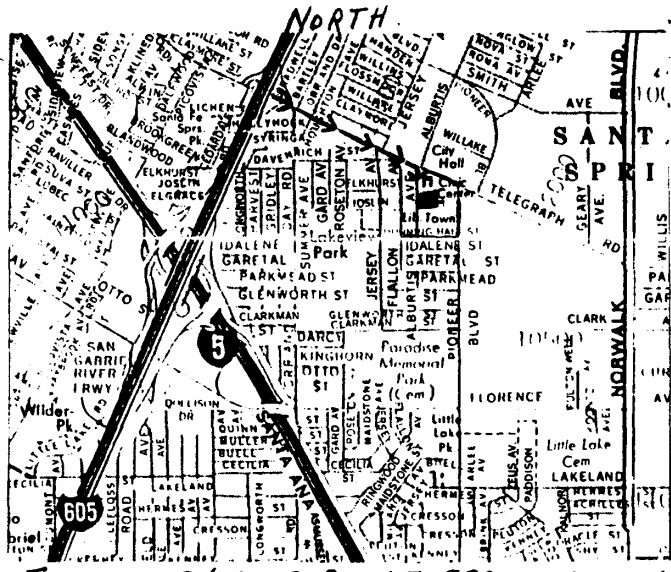
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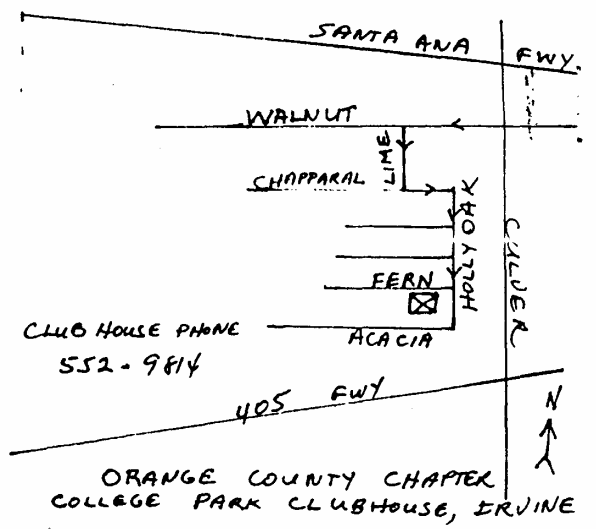
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