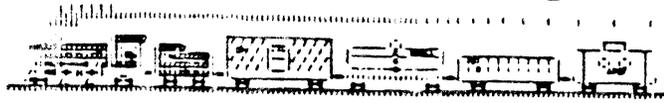




The OPAL EXPRESS

Published monthly by the
American Opal Society...



VOLUME #25
May and June 1993

ARE THERE OPAL MINES IN CALIFORNIA? YES!

Yes there are opal mines in California. In fact there are two. They are located in the Mojave Desert, north east of the city of Mojave. To get there from LA you take the 1-5 north to the 14. After you go through the city of Mojave, Hwy 14 will turn to the right and you will follow the road to the right. You will pass the road to the Tehachape Mine and the road to Randsbury. Then you will go past Red Rock Canyon. At the next passing zone, half way up the hill there is a dirt road on the right. There is sign to help you locate the turn off along the highway and then there are signs along the dirt road to help you find the mine. You will not need four wheel drive to get into the mine area. You will need to bring a hammer and other digging tools. Also be sure to bring a lot of water and dress cool. There is an outhouse there far your comfort. The one mine is open to the public bit the other is not. You will be going to the first mine, which is the Nowak Mine. It is off to the left and there is a sign to let you know where to turn. It is open seven days a week, bit they do close on holidays. The fee is \$2.00 for the day, per person. There are spaces there for campers with fire pits for cooking. Remember if you are getting to camp at the mine you need a permit as space is limited and there is a fee. You can get this at the mine. Also there are places along the dry wash on the way in you can use to camp that have fire pits. But these are first come first serve. We don't camp so we always stay at Whites Motel. It is right on the road into Mojave. They have clean rooms and the price is right. They also have a nice atmosphere.

The reason we have Opal Mines in California is Opal is a by product of volcanic activity. And believe it or not we have volcanoes in California. But, to get Opal you need just the right ingredients. These are heat, air pockets with water trapped in them, and silica. With these ingredients and a couple of million years you get Opal. The Opal you will find is mostly white with flashes of red and blue. There issome with flashes of green or yellow. There are even a few cherry Opals that the miners have found. The miners are very friendly and they love to show their Opals. You will also find a lot of common Opal. This is green to yellow and has not flash. There are also what look like Opals bit there are not. This will be clear to white and have flashes of red and yellow. The difference is that his is calcite and it will crumble. You will find the Opals in the light rocks, due to the air pockets. Also you want the rocks that are lighter in color. We usually go up in the early morning and stay till about 2:00. That is about all the time we can stand in the heat. The heat is different there than it is here by the ocean. It is dry and not as oppressive as it is here. Dennis and the kids went up for three days one time and they had a wonderful time. You will want to bring along something to take some of the larger rocks home to break up. So if you want to try you hand at finding your own Opal try the mines in Mojave.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the new officers and directors of the American Opal society I have several important announcements. First, we have an extremely competent team of officers who are dedicated to resolving problems and serving the membership. The new officers are as follows:

Jay Carey - President
David Burrton - 1st V.P.
Carla McCaque - 2nd V.P.
Tom Hays - Treasurer
Yvonne Burrton - Secretary

Thanks to the hard work of this team, we have pretty much completed the transition from the "Old" administration and have solved several important problems in the process.

Second, we are well on the way to having another successful show. Because of my previous experience as show manager, I have agreed to accept this responsibility again for this year. Tom Hays has volunteered to be assistant show manager for this year and show manager next year. This procedure for having one year's assistant manager be next years show manager should provide a smother transition and more consistent management of the show than we have had previously.

Third, we are fortunate to have Dennis and Debra Deno agree to coordinate the production of the newsletter. This is in keeping with our goals to (1) bring new membership into the society and (2) distribute the work of the society over a broader base of the membership so that no one gets "saturated". We again wish to thank Debra and Dennis as well as "Doc" Stambler and Carla McCaque who have also volunteered to help with the newsletter where possible.

Because of the extensive changes necessary, we are a bit late in getting our elections completed and the new officers functioning as a well coordinated team. I am happy to report that most of our problems are now behind us, and the society appears to be fundamentally stronger than I have seen it for many years.

One last comment. Probably because of the lateness in getting things going this year, a number of members have not yet sent in their dues. If you have not sent in your dues please do so immediately. Enclosed is a form for doing this. Also, please note the new mailing address for- the American Opal Society. Because the expense of publishing and mailing a newsletter is one of our higher costs the society incurs, we will have to discontinue sending the newsletter to members who do not paid their dues, as part of the dues is to help with this cost. We will gave awhile to get your dues in before this action is taken. So please send your dues in now while you are thinking about it.

OPAL SHOW REPORT

As we begin to make plans and get to work on this year's show, we would like to keep you informed as to the plans that are being made. The show will be held at the Quality Inn in Anaheim. With the new attractions at Disneyland, this is a prime location. Also we are looking into placing flyers in the surrounding hotel lobbies. Tourists mean sales!! We are also planning on putting posters on many of the phone and light poles in and around Anaheim. People will know that the Opal Show is in town this year and that we are serious about what we are doing.

We are looking into running articles in some of the daily papers the week before the show. Also we are going to try to get the dates of the show into the calendar- sections of some papers. We are putting announcements in the local Rockhound Newsletters this year also. With this increased push in advertising, we should have a great show with lots of sales.

So far we have signed a contract with the Quality Inn which allows us to setup on Friday evening at 6:00 PM, this alleviating the problem that we had last year. Also a block of rooms will be reserved for the opal dealers or show attendees. Cost of the rooms is \$49 per night. If you want to reserve a room, please let us know as possible, since our allocation may sell out quickly.

We have also finalized the Business License paperwork with the city of Anaheim. (Remember that all dealers must have their own valid State of California sales tax permits). Approximately half of the spaces have already been sold and paid for. Remember, that we get a 10% discount,

all dealers must have their spaces Fully paid for by June 1st. Also, our show policy of assigning dealer spaces on a first come - first served basis is being well received. This policy, which we intend to continue in future years, is intended to provide a fair and unbiased method of assigning dealer locations. The American Opal Society will use its best judgment in objectively assigning dealer spaces, consistent of course in meeting the physical layout constraints of the show hall.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR THE
OPAL SOCIETY?

By my crystal opal ball I see an exciting and interesting year ahead for the Opal Society.

Some of the things that are in the planning stages now are hands on workshops on cutting and setting Opals, a presentation on Opals and their history and in November the show. Also in the planning stages are outings to Mojave and Tecopa Mines. We are also looking into going into community centers to give talks on collecting Opal and working Opal.

One of the first things we are starting a membership drive. If you have not sent your dues in you should do it now so you will not miss out on any of the great things coming up this year. If we get the membership to grow, we can do more things as a group. To help with this, the Opal Express will be made available to the public at stores that sell opal or other rocks, also in some craft stores. Also this year you can get discount tickets to the Opal show if you are a paid member. When you pay your dues or any time before October 1st you can send a check in for \$3.00 for each ticket you need. The tickets at the door will be \$3.50.

There is one thing you as members can help with. We are looking for a permanent place to hold meetings and presentations. If you know of any place that may fit this bill, let us know. For now we are holding meets at the Bob's Big Boy at Carmenita off the I-5. The meetings are at 7:00 PM, the 2nd Thursday of each month.

As you can see there are a lot of things happening this year. Get involved, you don't want to miss out on any of the fun and excitement.

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves to you. Dennis and myself are the new editors of your newsletter. We are both rockhounds and opal fanatics. Dennis works at Lapidary Int'l and I do data entry for an auditing agency. The story on "Are there Opal Mines in CA" is from one of our rock hunting trips. We have been to the mine many times and even found a very good opal. We had it set in a ring and I wore it for a year. But like opals sometimes do, it cracked.

This is your newsletter, and starting as soon as we get some, there will be a section called "Letters to the Editor". This will be an open forum for you to express your ideas about the Opal Society, your opinions and/or complaints. What you think is important to all of us. Also, we would like you to contribute any stories you may have about how you came by an opal in an unusual way or if you have any stories of going to a show or hunting for opal. This is your newsletter and we need everyone to share their experience. So let us hear from you.

May 14, 15, and 16

West Coast Gem & Mineral Show

Holiday Inn Bristol Plaza, Costa Mesa Free admission and parking

May 15, 1993 10AM to 6PM, May 16 10AM to 5PM

Conejo Gem & Mineral Club 19th annual Show

Borchard Park, 190 Reino Rd., Newbury Park

Free admission and parking

June 5, 1993 10AM to 7:30 PM, June 6 10AM to 4PM

Glendora Gems, Gem & Mineral Show

Goddard School Gym, 859 E. Sierra Madre Ave., Glendora, CA

Free parking and admission

June 25 & 26, 1993 10AM to 6PM, June 27 10AM to 5PM

CFMS Show/Convention

Ventura County Fairgrounds, Ventura

\$4.00 admission

July 10, 1993 10AM to 6PM, July 11 10AM to 5PM

Culver City Rock & Mineral Club 32nd Annual Show

Veterans Memorial Auditorium

Overland at Culver Blvd., Culver City

Free admission

August 28, 1993 10AM to 6PM, Aug 29 10AM to 5PM

Montebello Mineral & Lapidary Society

Masonic Temple, 4573 Durfee Ave., Pico Rivera

Free admission

September 4, 1993 10AM to 6PM, Sept. 5 10AM to 5PM

La Pacifica Gem & Mineral Group

Carson Center Community Hall, 801 E. Carson St., Carson, CA

\$4.00 Admission

September 25, 1993 10AM to 6PM, Sept. 26 10AM to 5PM

Faceters' Gem Fair

Orange County Fairgrounds, Costa Mesa

Free admission and parking

October 9, 1993 10AM to 6PM, Oct. 10 10AM to 5PM

Victorville Gem Fair

San Bernardino County Fairgrounds, 14800 7th St. Victorville

Free admission and parking

October 16, 1993 10AM to 6PM, Oct. 17 10AM to 5PM

Gem Carvers Guild

Masonic Temple, 7604 Greenleaf Ave., Whittier

Free parking and admission

October 23, 1993 10AM to 6PM, Oct. 24 10AM to 5PM

Orange Belt Mineralogical Society

Citrus Building, Arrowhead Entrance

National Orange Show Grounds, San Bernardino

\$1.00 admission, free parking

November 6 and 7, 1993

American Opal Society Show

Quality Inn, Anaheim



American Opal Society, Inc.

The American Opal Society, Inc. is a non-profit organization, educational in nature, whose primary purpose is promoting interest in and knowledge of this precious gem. Our program is principally one of self help, plus assistance in developing knowledge related to opal by conducting meetings and programs, providing a monthly newsletter of Society and Chapter activities and information about opal, seminars, and an annual Opal and Gem Show & Sale.

Our members include artisans, craftspeople, designers, educators, and laymen whose vocation and/or avocation is opal. Initiation fees and dues are used to pay for the operations of the Society and its Chapters.

Present dues are:

Chapter Members:	\$10.00 Initiation Fee	
	\$26.00 Annual Dues	\$36.00 to Join
	(over 65 \$21.00)	\$31.00 to Join
Members-at-Large:	\$10.00 Initiation Fee	
	\$20.00 Annual Dues	\$30.00 to Join
	(over 65 \$15.00)	\$25.00 to Join
Foreign Members:	\$10.00 Initiation Fee	
	\$25.00 Annual Dues	\$35.00 to Join

Chapter members are those who live close enough to a Chapter to attend meetings and pay dues to a certain Chapter to enjoy the benefits of such. Members-at-Large are those who live a great distance away from an established Chapter or who do not wish to belong to a Chapter. Foreign members are those who live outside the Continental United States or Canada.

The American Opal Society, Inc. welcomes you. We believe that our present membership and you will gain both pleasure and knowledge in furthering the Society's goals.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION - AMERICAN OPAL SOCIETY, INC.

NAMES(S) : _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____ P.O. BOX _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

HOME PHONE: (____)____-____ BUSINESS PHONE: (____)____-____

OVER 65: YES () NO () AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$_____ CHECK NUMBER: _____

OCCUPATION: _____

SPECIAL INTEREST(S): _____

Please fill out complete and return your check or money order in the proper amount to:

AMERICAN OPAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 1384
South Gate, CA 90200

APPROVED BY _____ MEMBERSHIP NUMBER(S) ASSIGNED: _____

() INITIATION FEE PD. () DUES PAID CHAPTER: () YES () NO