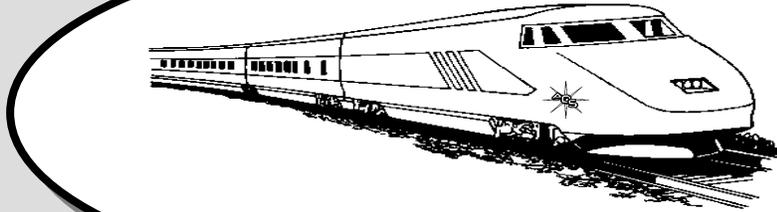


# The Opal Express

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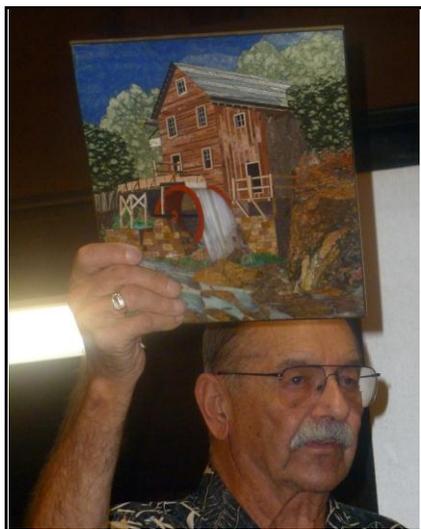
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## President's Message

*By Pete Goetz*

Well, fellow OPALHOLICS, it's that time of year again for the 45<sup>th</sup> Annual OPAL and Gem Show. So, grab your friends, neighbors, aunts, uncles, and maybe some folks you don't even know and come on down to White House Event Center and spend some time at the OPAL & GEM Show. We have a lot of your favorite vendors and a few new ones. As you might expect, our regular vendors will have a fantastic array of delightful and delectable opals for you to ogle and purchase. Our new vendor promise to add a little kick to your optical senses.

## Last Month's Speaker: Connie Grundke on Comnesso



Connie Grundke with one of Intarsia masterpieces he made.

Connie Grundke gave a great lecture on Intarsia a lecture on Intarsia at the Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> General Meeting.

Connie talked about the different types of inlayed stone art – what most people consider to be intarsia is really called comnesso, which is the technique of fashioning pictures with thin, cut-to-shape pieces of brightly coloured semiprecious stones. Intarsia is performed on a cut out inset in a larger piece of stone.

Connie gave us an idea of the amount of work it takes to make such a piece of

art., The time it takes to plan, gather materials, and construct comnesso is huge!

Connie also stated that the number of people actually doing such work is small. Thanks, Connie, for a great lecture!

## Members Only Website Password

To log onto the website's members only area at: [http://opalsociety.org/aos\\_members\\_only\\_area.htm](http://opalsociety.org/aos_members_only_area.htm) type: Name: "member" and Password: "matrixopal".

## It's Here! Next Month! The American Opal Society's 45<sup>th</sup> Annual OPAL & GEM SHOW

*The Largest Opal Show in USA!*

**Sat. Nov. 3, 2012 - 10AM - 6PM**

**Sun. Nov. 4, 2012 - 10 AM - 5PM**

- Opal and Gem Dealers** from the USA and Australia.
- Rough and Cut Opals;** gemstones; jewelry & supplies.
- Huge Raffle** many prizes of gemstones, jewelry, tools, etc.
- Free Opal Seminars** on Saturday with Paid Admission.
- Free Demonstrations** on gem cutting, jewelry making, etc.

### Same great location!

**White House / West Wing Event Center**

**1238 S. Beach Blvd.**

**Anaheim, CA 92804**

*Located at Hobby City*

**Dealer spots are still available!  
If you are interested, contact us ASAP!**

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American Opal Society Calendar	
Date	General Meeting Topic / Speaker
12-Jan-12	Fred & Charlotte Ward on Opals
09-Feb-12	Gretchen Krutz on Jewelry Design and Wax Carving.
08-Mar-12	Jim Pisani on the World of Jade, with an emphasis on California Jade
12-Apr-12	Mike Woodard Photography – Gem micro-photography
10-May-12	Pete Goetz on Cooking Andamooka Matrix
14-Jun-12	Live Opal Auction
12-Jul-12	Opal Cutting Seminar
09-Aug-12	<u>Member Show &amp; Tell</u>
13-Sep-12	Connie Grundke on Intarsia
11-Oct-12	Opal & Gem Show Work Session
03-Nov-12	45th Annual Opal & Gem Show
04-Nov-12	45th Annual Opal & Gem Show
08-Nov-12	Opal & Gem Show Recap
13-Dec-12	AOS Christmas Party Potluck

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## From Rags to Riches

*By Peter Greisl*

### Chapter 27 – The Move

The last couple of weeks went by with the same old story, working the shop, Johnny the mine and producing very little of salable opal. The only thing which was any excitement was, I did go and see Laszlo about the Compressor etc. I never have seen anything like that. It was an orbital engine with 6 Cylinders in a circle protruding from the engine block which was mounted on around frame which had casters so could move it. If you can picture an Aircraft engine from a Fokker turned on its side you would have exactly the same. The engine capacity was 250 cc per cylinder.

But what was so unique about this engine, only 3 Cylinders were combustion Cylinders and the other 3 were Compressor Cylinders. So every second cylinder was a compressor where pipes were running of and feeding in to a manifold with the attachments of a pressure gauge, tap and twin coupling for the hoses.

The whole engine was about 12 inches of the floor suspended in this round frame, below the block there was a 6 bladed fan in a cage which was the cooling of the engine when the motor was running which sucked the air from the top past the cylinders. The unfortunate part was it was gasoline driven.

Two people could lift it and move it when required, if surface permitting you could push it on the ground.

The technical specs were, Combustion Engine size 750 cc, Compressor size 750 cc, which delivers continuous 240 cubic feet of air, which was ample to drive two small Jack hammers continuously.

After Laszlo telling me all this about this equipment, he told me he was waiting on some parts to come to finish it off, it needed new rings in the engine cylinders, as it is low on compression, he should have them in the next couple of days, and he will finish it off by the weekend.

He told me all he wants is to recover the money it owed him plus the cost of the overhaul.

He told me it owes him \$200 and the overhaul would be \$ 100.00.

He showed me the Hoses and the Jack Hammers with all the chisels and drill head etc. Everything looked in excellent condition and Laszlo said he will service the Jack hammers and checks everything before I take delivery of it if I buy it.

It did not take a lot to convince me that this was a good investment and would make life much easier for Johnny and eventually for me.

So without getting any agreement from Johnny and Chris I decided to buy the compressor. Laszlo told me he will come to the shop and let me know when I can pick it everything up.

I drove to the shop and started my daily routine; Anne arrived and told me that they will be moving back to Adelaide on the weekend and she asked me if we are ready to take over their house. I agreed and said is it all right if Johnny starts bringing stuff up to the place and get things set up externally, like the Generator and Cutting room etc. Anne understood about my commitment with the shop and I did not have too much time so she agreed and said we can put everything in the Annex, Harry is already packing things up and emptying out everything what will not fit into their car as he is sending everything down to Adelaide in one of Johnny Lyons truck.

So things are moving in the right direction, all we need now is to have the mine producing.

She also told me about our neighbors, in front of us there is Doug Johnsons place the Opal Buyer, two claims behind us there is the place of Blue and Marianne and her two children and we could see the Hospital from the House as well.

Anne told me about Blue and Marianne they always have fights every week, as Blue is always drinking away the money and there is hardly anything left to buy food, she added many times Marianne came across and was crying as there was no money to buy food for the children, which was a real sad situation and she helped her quite often.

“By the way” Anne started to say “Under the Pot plant stand in the Lounge which stands on top of a green coloured concrete slab there is a piece of wooden floor which can be removed and under there is a Safe, you just remove the stand push the concrete slab away and lift up the wooden floor piece and you get access to the Safe, I will leave the Keys for it on top of the Safe door for you when we leave, if I forget to give it to you personally.”

“That’s great, at the moment we use a metal tin under a piece of wooden floor and have that covered with some Lino.” I replied.

At Lunch time I went to the claim and spoke with Johnny who did not have any news for me, he still was pulling dirt from the weekend. I told him briefly about the situation with Anne and asked him to come home about the same time as I am finish at the shop. He agreed and I went back to the shop. I saw Doug McCallum and asked him about Anne if he knew about her finishing this week. He told me yes and he has no replacement yet. He did ask me if I be able to handle it myself for a while till we get a replacement.

I told him I am sure I will be able to but you will find that sometimes the shop will not be in a spic and span situation, as I have to prepare the cuts, serve customers and make sausages etc., it will attract additional overtime for me which will affect the profitability.

He fully understands and just replied, “So be it, it will not be forever and I am sure the shareholders will have no problem with that, it should not be longer than a couple of weeks.” “Well as long as you know I said.”

Closing time Anne and I went home greeted my family and waited for Johnny. Chris asked me how everything went today, I told her I will explain and tell everything when Johnny arrives so I don’t have to repeat myself.

Johnny arrived and said, “Let me clean up first and then give me all the good stuff.” “Ok, Chris put the cattle on we have a cuppa I

said." When Johnny finished his shower he came in and said, "Let's have it" I told Chris and Johnny about the move, and then about the Compressor. Chris was more excited about moving and Johnny was absolutely over the moon about the compressor. He said, " Don't forget to keep tally of what you spend on Fuel, bits and pieces so we can settle any time we make some money,"

I replied, "I have and when the time comes and we find something more lucrative then we settle." You running at the moment roughly at \$ 800 for half of the equipment not counting the compressor purchase." Johnny nodded affirmative. I said to him, once we moved and we are settled and have all the Gear in place then we start seriously working the mine. I know at the moment it is a very hard slog, particular on your own, but after the weekend there will be no more holidays, it will be head down and bum up.

I will be there every day after the shop and we work Saturday and just have Sunday to recharge our batteries." You know here we are, because we made a decision of stealing from Mother Nature her beautiful creation of this great Rainbow Rock. It has been laying there for millions of years totally protected from any harm, and then we come along and with blood, sweat and tears we raping Mother Earth." Johnny just listened and then said," Yes I understand a lot of people they do it just for the hope to become rich, why did you decide to search for Opal?" I replied," When I found out that Opal is my Birth Stone, I started buying books about Opal and mining etc., and I went to Opal dealers in Sydney and looked at some stones in the flesh, and I was hooked, as soon as I seen the fire in the stone it was as if I got hypnotized and I decided I must look for this Birth Stone, So I can say I found some of these magnificent Gems, I feel like a archeologist, except he is looking for manmade artifacts, I am looking for Nature Created artifacts if you want to call it." Now I am here at the fields for just on three month, I put my families welfare in jeopardy, I nearly went broke in the first couple of month.

Johnny I took a big gamble, we gave up everything in Sydney we have been conned by a so called good friend, I am not going into any details, but I was so convinced that things will turn out ok for us, and I had the support from Chris as she believes in me.

When things got really scary and we were right down to the last five dollars and no idea what and where does the next food come from, I was very fortunate and had been given a reprieve, by getting the job at the co-op, this Job, which made it possible for us to survive and the possibility to continue to follow my dream." We were lucky we had a mild winter and we are at the end of it the weather is getting bit warmer, so there is no excuse anymore about anything.

We have a comfortable place to stay; we got a few dollars and just about all the equipment we need to be more productive."

"What I would like you to do is Johnny, help Chris to get everything together she does not need here and move it to Anne's place, Harry will be there and he show you where you can store the things, also dismantle the Generator set up and the Cutting Gear and move this also and set it up, when you at the place ask Harry how many light fittings there are in the place and let me know so I can buy the 32Volt Light Globes." Johnny acknowledged and said "we have everything done in a couple of days."

Chris was looking mesmerized and just said, "you got it all worked out." I replied," Yes I did, I don't want to have things drag on, as long as you got everything there you can then get the place ready at your leisure, and we can get on with what we came to the Fields for."

Over the next couple of days, nothing exciting eventuated other then Johnny did what he was asked to do and everything went like clockwork.

I paid Anne three month rent in advance and she gave me a receipt and her bank details for future payments.

Saturday was finally here and Johnny and Chris moved the last Items, and when I finished in the shop I went straight up to the place and found everyone there.

Anne and Harry were ready to leave for Adelaide their car was packed and Harry told me the Gas Bottle is full and so is the water tank.

We thanked them and wished them good luck and they returned the wishes and off they went.

And we were now the new Tenant. I said to Johnny got down to Gus's and pick up a bottle of Liebfrau Wine, we shall celebrate. He went and I said to Chris," come here," She came and I picked her up and carried her over the threshold in to our new domain.

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## **Russia Claims to Have Found Huge Diamond Deposit In Field**

*September 18, 2012, Associated Press*

MOSCOW – Russian scientists are claiming that a gigantic deposit of industrial diamonds found in a huge Siberian meteorite crater during Soviet times could revolutionize industry.

The Siberian branch of Russian Academy of Sciences said that the Popigai crater in eastern Siberia contains "many trillions of carats" of so-called "impact diamonds" -- good for technological purposes, not for jewelry, and far exceeding the currently known global deposits of conventional diamonds.

Nikolai Pokhilenko, the head of the Geological and Mineralogical Institute in Novosibirsk, told RIA Novosti news agency Monday that the diamonds include other molecular forms of carbon. He said they could be twice as hard as conventional diamonds and therefore have superlative industrial qualities.

He said the minerals could lead to a "revolution" in various industries. "But they can't upset a diamond market because it is shaped by diamonds for jewelry purposes."

The deposit was discovered by Soviet scientists in the 1970s, but was left unexplored as the Soviet leadership opted for producing synthetic diamonds for industrial use. The deposit remained classified until after the Soviet collapse.

Pokhilenko said that the diamonds owe their unparalleled hardness to enormous pressure and high temperatures at the moment of explosion when a giant meteorite hit 35 million years ago, leaving a 60-mile crater.

The Siberian branch of Russian Academy of Sciences said in a statement that scientists discussed the issue at a roundtable in Novosibirsk over the weekend, saying that further studies will be needed to assess economic aspects of their potential exploration.

Pokhilenko said his institute is planning to send an expedition to the crater in cooperation with Russia's state-controlled diamond mining company Alrosa.

*From <http://www.foxnews.com/>*

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**Here's a nice thread on setting opals from the Orchid Digest on <http://Ganoksin.com>. Talks about gluing, prongs, and bezel setting plus a log of philosophy. Enjoy! The Editor**

## **Orchid Digest- Setting Opals**

From <http://Ganoksin.com>

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**Eric Manchester Saturday, September 01, 2012**

James,

Ok so I have to ask (and I realize it's probably a real N00B of a question) I was always under the impression that once I push the bezel over that is it, there is no way to trim it back so get it right on the first try. So how can I do this, if I understand this I suspect my work will start improving 10 fold so I am kind of excited for the answer.

Thanks, Eric

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**James newton Saturday, September 01, 2012**

I do not use glue to secure an opal, except in the cases where I am doing repairs on poorly made or extremely worn jewelry, when I customer is not willing to spend the money it would take to do the job correctly. The customer is always advised ahead of time that I will be using a little cement if this is what I have to do.

An opal certainly can be set securely and tightly in a bezel, but it does take experience and skill to do so with confidence. Like any setting style, it pays to learn/practice on something other than a valuable gemstone while you hone those skills.

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**Mark Parkinson Saturday, September 01, 2012**

> Currently I am doing Bezel setting for most of my stone work. I am > very concerned that if I Bezel set them I will lose most of the > stone and the beauty of the opals.

My first thought is that the bezels only need to go just past the apex of the curve on the edge to secure the stone, so no need to cover much of the stone. White opals do benefit from a dark background, so some will use a closed back bezel and oxidize if silver or use some other method to darker the back plate. That does qualify as an enhancement that should be disclosed to the customer in my opinion. That said, I think bezel set opals are beautiful and also practical as the bezel does provide some protection to the fragile stones.

Mark

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**Hans Durstling Saturday, September 01, 2012**

A few opal setting considerations:

1) Glue is tasteless and vulgar; it will yellow given sufficient time (yes even epoxy 330). There is a good chance it will let go given sufficient time. Should you ever want to unset the stone to size or alter or repair a piece it is often problematical to dissolve the glue.

2) A claw setting concentrates the holding force on four or five (or however many claws there are) small points. That can be a risk factor: I've seen many opals chipped at the point of claw contact, or cracked right through, the crack starting at such a point. Also in the space between the claws the opal may be exposed & unprotected against falls and other impact hazards.

3) Opal is a fragile stone and chippy. Hence protection is beneficial. A bezel setting puts a shock absorbing protective metal cushion around the entire circumference of the stone and can be opened to remove the stone if the need arises.

Cheers Hans Durstling Moncton, Canada

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**Leonid Surpin Saturday, September 01, 2012**

> because they can be fragile, a set with glue into a fake setting Setting stones with glue could be appropriate in arts and crafts. In goldsmithing, such practice is never acceptable. There are a lot of fragile stones that are used in jewellery. There is never a reason to resort to the use of glue, except total and complete incompetence. Leonid Surpin [www.studioarete.com](http://www.studioarete.com)

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**Mark Parkinson Saturday, September 01, 2012**

> After I had set the opals, someone came up to me and said that in > most cases opals, because they can be fragile, a set with glue > into a fake setting. Fake meaning that the setting is for show > only and has zero structural value.

My opinion is, no glue ever, except for pearls. I was once told that glue is to jewelers what drywall screws are to a carpenter, a sign of incompetence. ; )

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**Mark Helen Hill Saturday, September 01, 2012**

If the bezels are made the correct size so that only the smallest amount of metal secures the stones, and left open backed, you shouldn't lose any (or much) of the stones' beauty. It's so easy to obscure too much of a stone with excess metal and also, if the bezel is too tall, it won't close nicely.

Amount of metal above the seat, the minimum needed to secure stone and thick enough metal so that it compresses rather than springing out and creating gaps.

*The Opal Express*

*The American Opal Society*

Helen UK

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**Leonid Surpin Sunday, September 02, 2012**

> Ok so I have to ask (and I realize it's probably a real NOOB of a > question) I was always under the impression that once I push the > bezel over that is it, there is no way to trim it back so get it > right on the first try. So how can I do this, if I understand this > I suspect my work will start improving 10 fold so I am kinda > excited for the answer.

Bezels are trimmed using safe files. Safe files cannot be purchased. They are made by slightly rounding and polishing sides of escapement file. Final trimming is done by highly polished graver. Second approach is to prepare bezel of correct height right away. It takes longer, but it results in the best appearance. Stone is placed in the bezel and height is noted. If adjustment is required, the stone is taken out and bezel if filed in normal fashion. Process is repeated until correct height is obtained.

Leonid Surpin [www.studioarete.com](http://www.studioarete.com)

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**Charles Anderson Sunday, September 02, 2012**

Hi Hans,

> 1) Glue is tasteless and vulgar.

> 3) Opal is a fragile stone and chippy. A bezel setting <snip>

I was a bit suspicious about glue, and wouldn't have used it, so I used sterling and made the top of the bezel very thin.

What about gallery wire?

Regards Charles A.

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**Charles Anderson Sunday, September 02, 2012**

> An opal certainly can be set securely and tightly in a bezel, but > it does take experience and skill to do so with confidence. Like > any setting style, it pays to learn/practice on something other > than a valuable gemstone while you hone those skills.

LoL, my teacher was cringing when I was setting a solid opal pair. I just did it because I was short on time and it just had to be done. :-D CIA

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**Peter W . Rowe Sunday, September 02, 2012**

> There is never a reason to resort to the use of glue, except total > and complete incompetence.

I can think of two, Leonid. If asked to reset a stone into an old/worn out or otherwise in dire need of repair, piece of jewelry, and setting the stone properly would require rebuilding or repairing the jewelry first, which would then cost more than the customer is able or willing to pay. In such instances, sometimes, simply to satisfy a customer who wishes a stone back in their jewelry and doesn't care if it's permanent or well done... Well, then sometimes, glue may be the only practical way to accommodate them. This does not qualify as actual jewelry making/goldsmithing of course. But it may be something that comes up in the course of being in the business of jewelry work/selling/repairing, and the end result of satisfying a customer's request, with the understanding that it is not really a good method and may be temporary, makes such a method practical and acceptable. Unfortunate perhaps, but sometimes, the right way is beyond a customer's budget. This may often occur also in cases where properly rebuilding a setting to properly allow resetting a stone might cost more than the jewelry is actually worth. Examples might include inexpensive silver jewelry... It is valid to say that the use of glue is not a good method or the right method in general, but in the real world, there are indeed instances where, for that particular instance, it's the best answer, even if not the best practice.

The second instance which occurs to me is in the "setting" of pearls on posts instead of in prongs or bezels, or whatever. While the classic method of splitting a post, fitting a tiny wedge, such that when the pearl is pressed in, expansion of the post makes it permanent, is nice, I can honestly say that in my whole career, I've only seen this done in commercial jewelry a few times, and those were old pieces. Everything else has relied on glue. Perhaps this is

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simply an illustration of an industry that's gotten lazy, but it certainly is common practice.

Peter

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**Todd Welti Sunday, September 02, 2012**

Depending on the color type and clarity of the opal, covering up part of the sides with the bezel can actually make the visible part brighter by preventing light from entering the sides and washing out the color. You can darken the inside of the bezel to enhance this effect. If you are comfortable using prongs and the setting configuration is reasonably protected, go for it.

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**Leonid Surpin Sunday, September 02, 2012**

> I can think of two, Leonid. If asked to reset a stone into an old/worn out or otherwise in dire need of repair, piece of jewelry, and setting the stone properly would require rebuilding or repairing the jewelry first, which would then cost more than the customer is able or willing to pay.

Consider the following scenario. Let's say that you yielded to customer demand and glue stone in, instead of rebuilding the ring as required. Sometime after such repair, the client may attend some social gathering, where some other jeweler may be present who upon seeing your repair may comment "What a piece of kaka". Do you think your client will admit that it was he/she who twisted your elbow to compromise your standards, or your client may say "Yeah, I would not go back to that guy. He really screwed me up."

Leonid Surpin [www.studioarete.com](http://www.studioarete.com)

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**Donald Dietz Sunday, September 02, 2012**

Mark, there is one exception to this. Many years ago, when I was repairing lots of jewelry, I would get the simple opal rings made in Thailand and sold on the then new TV marketing shows.

I discovered that many of the broken opals resulted from uneven bearings. To resolve that problem without completely rebuilding the setting, I would cut a new stone and lay in a thin film of 2 part clear epoxy under the stone's girdle.. Of course the epoxy was not intended to hold the stone; the prongs did that, but the epoxy would level things up and provide a good base for the stone. Cheers from Don in SOFL

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**James Newton Tuesday, September 04, 2012**

Consider the following scenario. Let's say that you yielded to customer demand and glue stone in, instead of rebuilding the ring as required. Sometime after such repair, the client may attend some social gathering, where some other jeweler may be present who upon seeing your repair may comment "What a piece of kaka". Do you think your client will admit that it was he/she who twisted your elbow to compromise your standards, or your client may say "Yeah, I would not go back to that guy. He really screwed me up." That will never be a problem. I would never make any such move without first establishing a full understanding of all the options, and costs with the customer beforehand.

In the end it is left up to my customer how they wish me to proceed after they have had this discussion.

I am providing a service to my customer, and in the end it is their needs and limitations that determine my path forward on their jewelry, and not my own ego or wishes.

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**Anthony Lloyd-Rees Tuesday, September 04, 2012**

I am quite surprised that nobody has mentioned rear setting of Opals.

Using this method a very robust and protective bezel can be built and there is little chance of damaging the opal as the rear setting is just a matter of a couple of prongs or a retaining ring.

Another advantage is if the stone is accidentally hit there is a very high possibility that it will push out of setting instead of shattering.

Tony.

Anthony Lloyd-Rees. [www.OpalsInTheBag.com](http://www.OpalsInTheBag.com)

**Judy Willingham Tuesday, September 04, 2012**

Hello everyone,

This discussion raises a thought. Donald noted the use of a thin film of two-part epoxy to level up a floor for an opal before setting. I recall a past comment that advocated placing a bit of glue, specifically at points of the stone, before setting. The purpose being to protect that fragile part during setting. The glue had nothing to do with securing the stone in the setting. Seems like a good idea to cushion the stone.

What say you all??

Judy in Kansas, where the half inch of rain last night was wonderful and came at just the right time for my newly planted mums.

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**Fred Meredith Tuesday, September 04, 2012**

Years ago I used to cut a lot of opal and at the time I was instructed not to bezel opal because of the possibility of expansion and contraction of the stone with temperature and the bezel not giving the same way and causing the opal to crack. Has anyone experienced this or is it really not a problem?

Thanks, FredM

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**Leonid Surpin Wednesday, September 05, 2012**

> I am providing a service to my customer, and in the end it is their needs and limitations that determine my path forward on their jewelry, and not my own ego or wishes.

When I started in this business, I was told that 10 years I would have to work just to establish my reputation and then my reputation will work for me for as long as I maintain it. And it turned out to be about right. What you call ego, I call protecting my investment. But I do not want to create an impression that I somehow apologetic for my ego. Far from it. One cannot practice goldsmithing without one.

Leonid Surpin [www.studioarete.com](http://www.studioarete.com)

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**Leonid Surpin Wednesday, September 05, 2012**

> The purpose being to protect that fragile part during setting. The glue had nothing to do with securing the stone in the setting.  
> Seems like a good idea to cushion the stone.

Definition of gemstone is RARITY, BEAUTY, and DURABILITY. All three must be present to call something a gemstone. If gemstone cannot be set by normal methods, it means that durability is lacking and it is not a gemstone. There are many technical reasons why it should never be done. But the ethics alone should be enough of deterrent. By setting stone with glue, one perpetrates a fraud on a client.

Leonid Surpin [www.studioarete.com](http://www.studioarete.com)

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**Wintermte1 Thursday, September 06, 2012**

I've never had a problem with it....but all bezel sets are made with 22K gold and might be able to expand or contract enough to offset whatever the stone is doing

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**Pedro Alonso-Sanchez Friday, September 07, 2012**

Hello all,

> Definition of gemstone is RARITY, BEAUTY, and DURABILITY  
If diamond being plane pressurized carbon- mines need to be closed or blew up in the sky to control the price, they're not rare anymore. If the argyle mine produced more than 9 million carats a year (for 2011) of diamonds, where is the rarity then?

That as a single mine amongst more than 30 knowing mines on earth and it's not even the biggest one.

The biggest mine (most production) found up to 25 million carats in 2011. World For the ones who believe that industrial diamonds are included, they're not. The total amount of diamonds is 144.000.000 carat a year (for 2011)! Diamonds are forever but rare.... no way.

The definition of what a gemstone is should be reviewed instead of using rarity, beauty and durability.

I understand the concept of this "rarity" subject. However, to my opinion, all of this is more related to money and marketing then to

rarity. In the same context, softer stones (lower than 7 or even 5 on Mohs scale) are gemstones as well and do not answer to durability. I know that fellow jewelers will have a different opinion and some of them will not like the facts but that's the way it is. Have fun and enjoy Pedro

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**Elliot Nesterman Friday, September 07, 2012**

Excepting pearls on posts I'd never think of using glue to set a stone. Now, I'm not a setter, but if a setter suggested gluing in a stone I'd never use him again. However, there was an instance years ago where I had to use epoxy, not to set a stone but to take out the last bit of wobble.

When I first started in the trade I worked for Hans Engelhart (S. Engelhart & Co., 18 E. 48 St.). This was back in the early 80s, Leonid might remember them. Most of our pieces went to T&Co., this'd be back when Willy Kalish was the shop foreman at Tiffany.

Anyway, in the shop were Mr. Engelhart's uncles, two brothers then in their late 70s, who were exemplary setters. They used to get pieces to set from jewelers up and down the East coast. I never actually knew their names; they were just "the uncles."

One day a ring came in from Tiffany for repair. It was an Egyptian revival ring from the 20s, platinum, set with a single, large, pyramidal cabochon sapphire. The sapphire was about 15 carats, a true Kashmir blue and remarkably clean; a real gem. The stone had come out of the setting and Tiffany had sent it to the uncles to reset. The setting was four low cleats along the sides of the pyramid. The cleats were about 3/4 the length of the sides and stopped short of the corners. The uncles reset the stone, pushing the cleats as much as possible. The stone was secure, it wasn't going anywhere. It'd be good for another 50 years.

But, there was a very slight wiggle to the stone. The seat had worn and no matter how the cleats were tightened the wiggle remained. That's when it came to my bench. My job was to flow a tiny amount of Epoxy 330 around the underside perimeter of the stone where it touched the seat, just to remove that tiny remaining wiggle. It was either that or build up the seat with new metal and recut it. I suspect that Tiffany had given my boss a budget which precluded that much labor. So we used epoxy to take out the wobble.

So, that's the only time I've used epoxy to set a stone.

Elliot

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**Eric Manchester Friday, September 07, 2012**

Ok another new one for me. How does one rear set an opal?

Thanks, Eric

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**Leonid Surpin Friday, September 07, 2012**

> If the argyle mine produced more than 9 million carats a year (for > 2011) of diamonds, where is the rarity then?

My position always has been that commercial grades diamonds are not true gemstones. De Bears are marketing geniuses! They have been able to convince general public that diamonds are something special. They are not. Only D(s) and maybe E(s) in combination with impeccable clarity and perfect cuts should be considered gemstones.

Leonid Surpin [www.studioarete.com](http://www.studioarete.com)

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**David Cruickshank Friday, September 07, 2012**

Rear setting an opal or other stones. I would prepare an adequately deep setting and carefully prepare the top edge so the stone will not come out. Then prepare a wire, say 0.8 mm and make a ring to fit tightly inside the setting, (for an irregularly shaped stone base make the wire ring follow the shape of the base of the stone) insert stone and the shaped wire ring. Now using a sharp V graver inside the setting raise a series of small 'claws' gently closing against the wire ring, do one then repeat on the opposite side then on the quarters. Do 8 or more of these claws, and then go over them again tightening them against the wire. I would suggest you practice this process on a sample to get the 'feel' of the process.

David Cruickshank Australia [jewellerydavidcruickshank.com.au](http://jewellerydavidcruickshank.com.au)

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**Vernon Wilson Saturday, September 08, 2012**

I have used epoxy when setting opals many times... not to hold the stone in place but to make sure the stone had a very even support under it before setting the bezel. Once I started using this technique I never cracked or broke another opal.. And to my knowledge none of my clients have ever cracked or broken a opal I have set this way in the over 40 years I have been doing it.

Vernon Wilson

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**Richard Hopkins Tuesday, September 11, 2012**

Did I real that post right? Did Leonid imply there was a lack of durability in opals and hence they were not gemstones? LOL how durable are natural emeralds?

Quality Opals are equal in visual impact to any other fine stone.

I have not read much here really relevant to opal setting, so let's do Opal Setting 101 for a pendant.

Opals are not constructed from crystal structure, the stones are made from small spheres which are easy to separate or crack.

Opal setting is a specialized skill. For me it is ten times harder to set an opal than a round 1 carat diamond.

Opals are cut en cabochon to maximize the stone. Hence they are often in 'freeform' shapes or cabs.

They, unlike the diamond, are not computer precision cut.

Hence the back of the opal is usually uneven!!!!!!!

It takes a long time to set an opal.

Have frequent brakes this could be very nerve wracking.

Make your bezel from .8mm thick fine silver or gold and as wide as the stone is high.

It should be big enough to allow you to easily pass the stone through the bezel. Opals do not like being pushed around. They can be broken more easily than turquoise or malachite.

Now you have your bezel. You have to make the seat for the stone.

Get a strip of .8mm square wire of the parent metal as long as the bezel.

Now the 'fun' starts. Fit the .8mm wire into the inside of the bezel. Cut to size and solder. Allow to cool before pickling.

Now you have a bezel and a piece of .8mm square wire the shape of the bezel that fits tightly into the bezel, this is the seat for the stone. Push the wire into the bottom of the bezel.

Now the extra fun starts. Place the stone with the bezel around it face down. I use a rubber bench pin for this.

GENTLY push the wire down till it conforms to the shape of the stone. You may need to burnish the wire back to the sides of the bezel. This depends on how far you have to move the seat; the deformation of the wire may pull it off the sides. This is why fine metals are use they are malleable.

Solder the wire seat in. Solder on bail etc. Clean up and bring to final polish and clean.

Now you have a bezel with a seat that fits your stone. If setting a cab some filing may be needed to bring the bezel height down. This is a metal sacrifice due to the process of getting the seat to fit the stone.

If you have a freeform stone you need to file the bezel to the contours of the stone. Yes metal sacrifice makes opal setting expensive.

Put the setting on your bench pin and put in the stone. Use a bezel pusher, for a cab use usual setting sequence. But check with a loupe frequently. When the metal is down on the stone leave it for the moment.

With a freeform stone start pushing from the Corners.

When the bezel is down clean up tool marks.

Burnish the metal to make it gleam, this takes TIME and louping.

TAKE TIME AND CARE AND YOU CAN DO IT! TTFN Richard

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**Mark Parkinson Tuesday, September 11, 2012**

> Opal setting is a specialized skill. For me it is ten times harder

> to set an opal than a round 1 carat diamond.

Over the years I have had this discussion with retail jeweler clients. I had a price list for setting stones based on stone size. I might charge \$20 to set a 6mm round stone in prongs. The jewelers were fine with that when it was a diamond, but would sometimes question it when it was a garnet or even an opal. They would say, in the case of a garnet, the stone only cost me \$5, how can you charge me \$20 to set it!?! My reaction was always the same, that the value of the stone is irrelevant to me when setting it and that it can be more risky and time consuming to set the garnet or the opal than the diamond...so really I should be charging you more to set the more fragile stones. That usually ended the conversation.

Mark

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**Todd Welti Thursday, September 13, 2012**

Richard, I disagree with you on some points regarding bezel setting of opals.

> Quality Opals are equal in visual impact to any other fine stone.

They are not equal, they are GREATER! About most opals not being flat on the back, I almost always cut them flat on the back to avoid these complications. I see rounded backs mostly for high end black opals, where it has been customary to cut this way to maximize weight (a trick which has long since been taken into account when valuing the opals). I don't think opal setting, if properly cut, is that hard. I have set quite a few, mostly without problems.

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**Andrew Fine Thursday, September 13, 2012**

Hi Richard!

Thanks SO much for the lecture. When I traveled to Spencer, Idaho, I had picked up more than a few "opal starters" at one of the stores there.

An "opal starter" is a piece of opal which has already been extracted from its matrix and placed on a piece of dark stone.

The craftsman had put a layer of epoxy over the starter and said that when I was ready to use it, go gently with 1200 grit abrasives.

Since I'm not up to bezels yet (I don't even know how to solder sterling yet, I just fuse fine silver), I thought to scan the opal, derive the outline with GIMP, create the CNC code to mill out a window from silver with a surrounding step the opal's thickness, then utilize a cold connection to fasten the frame to the rest of the piece.

Could that fly? Thanks, Andrew Jonathan Fine

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**Richard Hopkins Saturday, September 15, 2012**

I only said equal to not upset anyone. You must have better cutters where you are.

In Australia many miners cut their own not are not that good. To be blunt a good opal beats anything else. Now have we started a million posts on what are the most amazing stones.

TTFN Richard

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**October 2012 Gem & Mineral Shows**

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

3-8—JOSHUA TREE, CA: Annual show; Joshua Tree Sportsmans Club; JTSC; 6225 Sunburst Ave.; Thu. 1-7, Fri. 9-7, Sat. 9-7, Sun. 9-7; free admission; dealers, fine jewelry, loose colored gemstones, fashion jewelry, beads, mining equipment, lapidary supplies, discount prices; contact Wayne Hamilton, 6225 Sunburst Ave., Joshua Tree, CA 92252, (760) 366-2915; e-mail: waylin2000@msn.com; Web site: www.jtsportsmansclub.com

5-7—BIG SUR, CA: 21st annual Big Sur Jade Festival; South Coast Community Land Trust, Pacific Valley School PTOI; Pacific Valley School; Highway 1; Fri. 12-5, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; free admission; contact Kirk Brock, PO Box 1349, Carmel Valley, CA 93924, (831) 659-3857; e-mail: jademan1@hotmail.com; Web site: www.bigsurjadefestival.com

5-7—DEL MAR, CA: Wholesale and retail show; Gem Faire Inc.; Del Mar Fairgrounds; 2260 Jimmy Durante Blvd.; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$7 (weekend pass), children (11 and under) free; jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, exhibitors, on-site jewelry repair; contact Yooy Nelson, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com

6-7—LAKESIDE, CA: Annual show; El Cajon Valley Gem & Mineral Society; The Lakeside Rodeo Grounds; 12584 Mapleview Rd., off Hwy. 67; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; free admission; mineral specimens, slabs, rough rock, beads, jewelry, fossils; contact Bob Murphy, 658 S. Sunshine St., El Cajon, CA 92020, (619) 672-1422; e-mail: accentwithtile@cox.net; Web site: www.elcajonvalleygemandmineralsociety.com/ourannualshow2011.html

12-14—SACRAMENTO, CA: Wholesale and retail show; Gem Faire Inc.; Scottish Rite Center; 6151 H St.; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$7 (weekend pass), children (11 and under) free; jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, exhibitors, on-site jewelry repair; contact Yooy Nelson, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site:

13-14—TRONA, CA: 71st annual "Gem-O-Rama"; Searles Lake Gem & Mineral Society; SLG&MS Lapidary and Show Bldg.; 13337 Main St., corner of Main and Trona Rd.; Sat. 7:30-5, Sun. 7:30-4; free admission; field trips, more than 20 dealers, 50 exhibits, geode cutting and sales, demonstrations, games, gem dig, door prizes; contact Jim or Bonnie Fairchild, 84830 12th St., Trona, CA 93562, (760) 372-5356; Web site: www.1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub/

13-14—VISTA, CA: Annual show; Vista Gem & Mineral Society; Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum; 2040 N. Santa Fe Ave.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; free admission; dealers, demonstrators, children's wheel of fortune, raffle; contact Ray Pearce, (760) 726-7570 or Lois Harr, (760) 724-0395

19-21—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 (weekend pass), children (11 and under) free; jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, exhibitors, on-site jewelry repair; contact Yooy Nelson, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com

20-21—ANDERSON, CA: 59th annual show; Shasta Gem & Mineral Society; Shasta District Fairgrounds; Briggs St., eight miles south of Redding; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-4; free admission; gems, jewelry, fossils, beads, polished stones, equipment, silent auction, demonstrations, gold panning, exhibits; contact Kelly O'Leary, (530) 722-7133; e-mail: kelly13@shasta.com; Web site: shastagemandmineral.com

20-21—LOS ALTOS, CA: Show; Peninsula Gem & Geology Society; Los Altos Civic Center-Youth Center; One San Antonio Rd.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 11-5; adults \$3, juniors (12 to 18) \$2, children (under 12) free with adult; contact Steve Jobe, (408) 834-5384; e-mail: steve\_jobe@sbcglobal.net; Web site: www.pggs.org

20-21—PLACERVILLE, CA: Annual show; El Dorado County Mineral & Gem Society; El Dorado County Fairgrounds; 100 Placerville Dr., Hwy. 50 Exit 44B; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; adults \$4, children free; 40 display cases, 45 dealers, minerals, gems, jewelry, beads, findings, fossils, petrified wood, meteorites, opals, carvings, lapidary material, equipment, educational kits and supplies, special copper exhibit, lapidary and jewelry making demonstrations, free rocks and activities for children, geodes, grab bags, silent auction, bargain rocks; contact Arlene Williams, (530) 676-2472; e-mail: info@rockandgemshow.org; Web site: www.rockandgemshow.org

20-21—WALNUT CREEK, CA: Show; Pacific Crystal Guild; Civic Park Community Center; 1375 Civic Dr.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; adults \$6, children (12 and under) free; 30 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

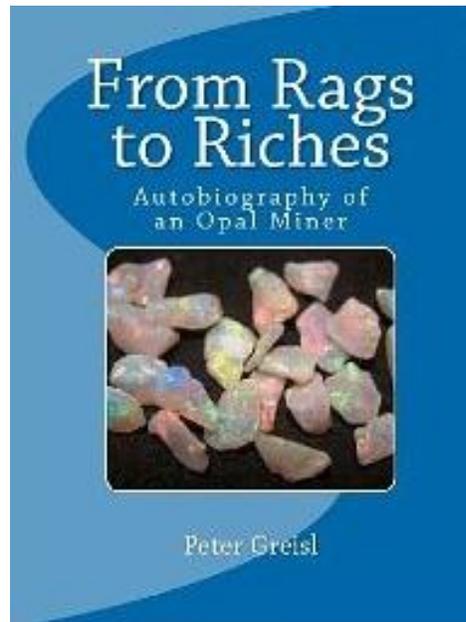
20-21—WHITTIER, CA: Annual show; Whittier Gem & Mineral Society; Whittier Community Center; 7630 WA Blvd.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; free admission; dealers, displays, lapidary demonstrations; contact Marcia Goetz, 755 W. Dike St., Glendora, CA 91740, (626) 260-7239; e-mail: joenmar1@verizon.net

26-27—WEST HILLS, CA: Annual show; Woodland Hills Rock Chippers; First United Methodist Church; 22700 Sherman Way; Fri. 3-9, Sat. 10-5; free admission; dealers, gems, minerals, rocks, fossils, jewelry, displays, demonstrations, silent auction, crafts, Future Rockhounds of America booth, kids' activities, raffles; contact Mary Beth Pio, (818) 349-2943; e-mail: info@rockchippers.org; Web site: www.rockchippers.org

26-28—SANTA ROSA, CA: Wholesale and retail show; Gem Faire Inc.; Sonoma County Fairgrounds; 1350 Bennett Valley Rd.; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$7 (weekend pass), children (11 and under) free; jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, exhibitors, on-site jewelry repair; contact Yooy Nelson, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com

# "FROM RAGS TO RICHES"

The book, ***From Rags to Riches*** by Peter Greisl, that has been printed a chapter at a time in this newsletter is finally in print. ***From Rags to Riches*** is the autobiography of a real opal miner in the Australian Outback town of Andamooka.



To purchase the book, please visit the website, <http://opallover.com> and follow the online purchasing instructions.

You can also contact Peter Greisl personally and place an order. You can contact Peter at +61 417 555923 or e-mail him at [gem@opallover.com](mailto:gem@opallover.com). Peter will accept MasterCard, Visa, or PayPal.

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Tuesday-Saturday 10am-3pm. Appointments Also Available

# 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](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](mailto:membership@opalsociety.org).

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**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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# The Opal Express

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

**Volume #45 Issue #10  
October 2012**

## Some Topics In This Issue:

- Last Month's Speaker: Connie Grundke on Comesso
- From Rags to Riches, Ch. 27 – The Move
- Russia Claims to Have Found Huge Diamond Deposit In Field
- Orchid Digest- Setting Opals

## Important Dates:

October 9 - Board Meeting

October 11 - General Meeting:

Opal & Gem Show Preparation Meeting  
Please come to help organize for the Show

### — GENERAL MEETINGS —

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

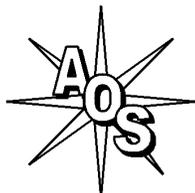
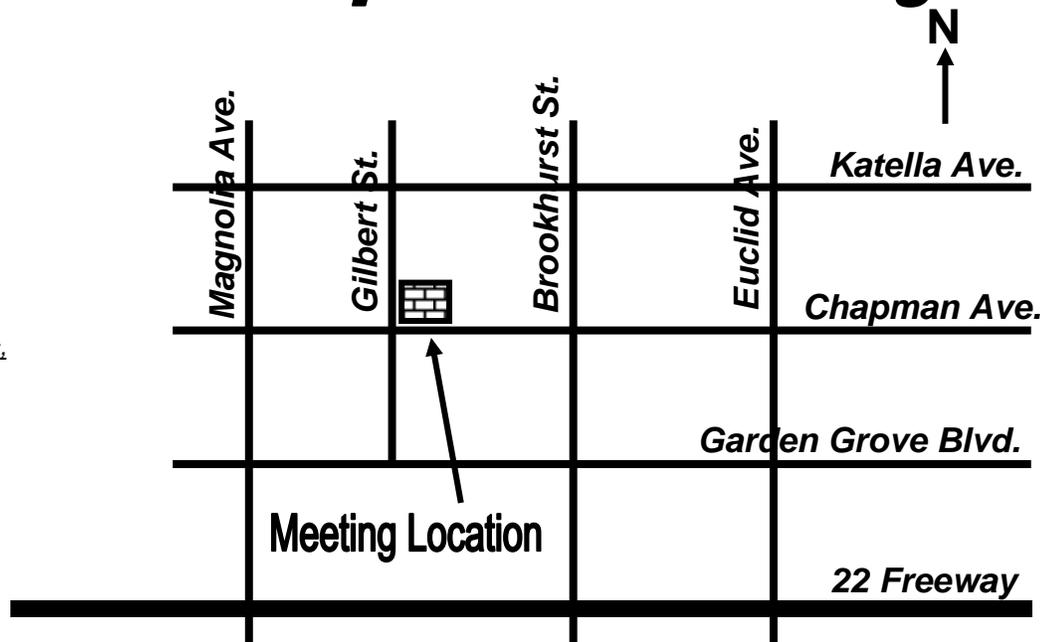
Garden Grove Civic Women's Club  
9501 Chapman Ave.  
Garden Grove, CA 92841  
(NE corner of Gilbert & Chapman)

### MEETING ACTIVITIES

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

TO:

# October 11 Opal & Gem Show Preparation Meeting



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

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