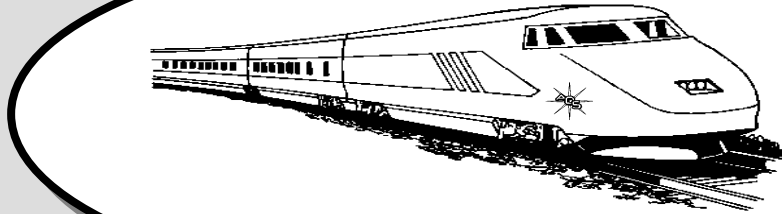


The Opal Express

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Possible New Venue for the Opal & Gem Show



President Pete Goetz at the Phoenix Club

By Jim Pisani

We (the AOS Board) may have found a new venue for our Opal & Gem Show. It is the Anaheim Event Center at the Phoenix Club (see <http://www.anaheimeventcenter.com>). So far, everything is looking good. The place has a number of attributes. It is large, with 11,500 square feet internally. In addition, there is also an accompanying huge outdoor area where vendors can also set up. The price is also very competitive with other venues we have been looking at and much better than the Whitehouse Event Center. Power should not be a problem; they have plenty and their own fixtures and cabling. They will also have outdoor food vendors;



President Pete Goetz in the Phoenix Club

along with a full service German restaurant in the Phoenix Club building. There is also plenty of parking, and the site is fairly close to the 57 Freeway. A minor issue is that we may not have a seminar room, but they may be able to section off part of the main room.

The biggest positive about the center and the biggest challenge is the size. We can easily double or triple the number of tables for rent to dealers, which would mean more profit for the society. This means we need to find a lot more dealers for the show. Also, we need a large increase in attendance to fill such a venue. This means more publicity advertisement and getting the word out. This will mean we need more help from the membership to make this happen.

We are excited about this venue. The staff is eager for our show to be there, with a possible long term stay. The board needs to tie up some loose ends and come to agreement with the center. Stay tuned.

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January 10th Lecture – Opals of the Americas – Part 2

Jim Pisani will be the lecturer for the January 10th General Meeting. He will present a slide show on **Opals of the Americas – Part 2**. Part 1 was only the opals of California. This lecture will concentrate on opal deposits of the USA outside of California. This includes about a dozen states.

Jim will also have sample opals from the various sites around the country. Don't miss it!

AOS Calendar for 2013

By Jim Pisani

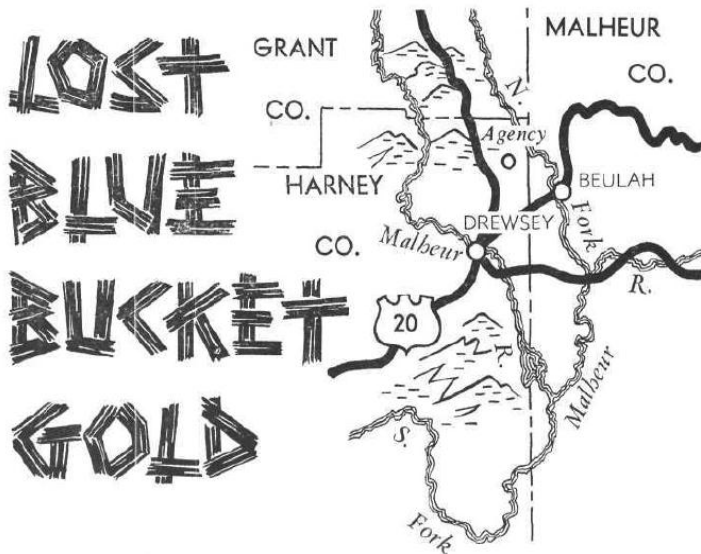
Below is the tentative AOS Calendar for 2013. We need to fill most of the calendar with interesting speakers, so any suggestion from members would be appreciated.

American Opal Society Calendar	
Date	General Meeting Topic / Speaker
10-Jan-13	Opals of The Americas, Part 2 – Jim Pisani
14-Feb-13	To be announced
14-Mar-13	To be announced
11-Apr-13	To be announced
09-May-13	To be announced
13-Jun-13	Live Opal Auction
11-Jul-13	Opal Cutting Seminar
08-Aug-13	Member Show & Tell
12-Sep-13	To be announced
10-Oct-13	Opal & Gem Show Work Session
03-Nov-13	46th Annual Opal & Gem Show
04-Nov-13	46th Annual Opal & Gem Show
14-Nov-13	Opal & Gem Show Recap
12-Dec-13	AOS Christmas Party Potluck

Members Only Website Password

To log onto the website's members only area at: http://opalsociety.org/aos_members_only_area.htm type: Name: "member" and Password: "opalyear".

One of my favorite treasure stories. By the way, this area is near Virgin Valley, Nevada, home of the black opal. The Editor.



Lost Blue Bucket Gold

By John D. Mitchell, Map sketch by Margaret Gerke

IN THE YEAR 1845, four years before the California gold rush, an emigrant train was on its way across the Great Plains. Oregon, not California, was its goal — land, not gold, its mission.

The pioneers worked their way across the country with the aid of a compass. They crossed desert, plain and mountains keeping on a fairly straight course. If a mountain range stood in their way, they crossed instead of detouring around it. Finally they reached Gravelly Ford Crossing on the Humboldt River, at the present site of Beowawe, Nevada. Here they split into two parties. One party continued along the Humboldt River, while the other group struck due north by way of the Black Rock Mountains. From the latter party a strange tale originated years later.

Leaving the Black Rock Mountains behind, the wagon train came to a high mountain range. The approaching slopes were gradual, and the party managed to reach the top with all the wagons. From this high point the wagon boss got a good view of the surrounding country and took bearings on the Twin Sister Peaks. The west side of the mountain was found to be very steep. In those days lock chains were used as brakes, but they would not serve here. Heavy timbers were cut and chained to the several wagons, and in this manner they made their way down.

While the wagons were being taken down the mountainside, camp was made at a spring in the canyon below. Some of the members of the party, gathering wood for the campfire, picked up pieces of metal that looked to them like brass. These people were farmers and knew very little about gold. They did not recognize the "pretty yellow rocks" as rich gold nuggets. The children picked up quite a few of the "pebbles" to play with. Several buckets were filled with them. The buckets, like the wagons, were painted blue. While camped at the little spring, one of the women in the party became sick and died. They buried her near the spring, heaping up rocks on the grave, and left one of the little blue buckets hanging on a branch as a marker. After successfully crossing the mountain the little party continued on its way, unaware of the fortune swinging in the little blue buckets beneath the wagons. The emigrants had more grief while crossing the Deschutes River. The wagons capsized, the buckets were lost or their contents spilled into the water. Only a few of the little yellow pieces of metal—those the children were playing with or carried in their pockets—were saved.

The party reached northwestern Oregon, settled on homesteads and immediately undertook the task of making a living in the wild, untrammled west. Several years later, a few of these settlers moved down to Sutter's Fort in California. Here they saw the nuggets recovered by Marshall in the mill race. The nuggets looked just like the little yellow rocks they had picked up in eastern Oregon. Eventually they obtained a few of the little stones from friends who had remained in Oregon, and showed them to their newly made acquaintances in California. They were pronounced pure gold. So much excitement was created by the discovery that a party of 90 persons was immediately organized to return to southeastern Oregon and search for the rich ground that had now become known as the Blue Bucket Placer. Hostile Indians soon put a damper on the party's intentions. The outfit was ambushed, and more than half of the gold seekers were killed. Only two men who knew, or thought they knew, the location of the golden canyon survived to get back to California. These two were members of the original emigrant party. They died shortly afterwards due to hardships suffered on the trip. However, before they died they met and told a Dr. Drane of Yreka, California, the story and gave him specific instructions how to find the canyon in which they had found the nuggets.

Dr. Drane was running a store and hotel and doing some placer mining in addition to his practice, and he was loath to leave his business to travel north. A trapper from the Hudson Bay country on his way to the California goldfields stopped at Yreka. The doctor showed him some of the gold nuggets that he daily washed out in his sluice boxes. "If that's gold," said the stranger, "I know where there's a pile of it. In a steep walled canyon northeast of here are lots of those yellow stones—some larger, some smaller. A man

could load two horses with all they could carry in half a day. Why, you could just pick them up right out of the streambed."

The trapper, it seems, had wintered his horses in the canyon and had found the gold there the following spring when taking out the animals. While the trapper was describing the place, the doctor recalled the story of the two sick men. According to the description, the two places were identical. The interest of the doctor grew and grew. Eventually, with two trusted friends and the trapper, he set out to look for the canyon. The trapper backtracked by the dead embers of his campfires. Not until they reached the head of Goose Lake Valley did the doctor know where he was going. From the top of Warner Hill he could see the surrounding country and get his bearings. The trapper pointed out the two peaks to the northeast about 120 miles away. "There," he said, "That mountain off to the right is the one. The canyon lies on this side and to the north of it. That is where I put my horses out to graze. The creek runs full in the spring and is low in the fall. The canyon is level at the lower end. There is a trail into it and plenty of grass. The upper end is steep. The walls are so close together that it is about all a man can do to get a horse through."

The three men found the place just as described but were doomed to disappointment. A recent cloudburst had played havoc with the canyon. The streambed was piled high with brush, boulders, and sand. The three men looked long and hard, but not a trace of gold could they find. The doctor never doubted that they were in the right place, but then he might have been wrong. With their food supply almost gone, and being exhausted from their long search, the trio reluctantly gave up.

Some 20 or more years later, in 1879, a boy, G. S. Johnson, and a man, William Adams, were traveling across Oregon. From Malheur Lake they headed into and camped at the agency of the Malheur Indian reservation. Adams, an old California miner, liked the looks of the rocks and formations of the country in and around the old agency buildings.

The Malheur reservation at that time was located where Harney, Grant, and Malheur Counties join. The agency was located on the southwestern slopes of the Burnt River Mountains, west of Buelah and north of Drewsey. At that time white men were not allowed to stay very long on the reservation, or to prospect for minerals.

Johnson remembered a conversation with the agent while camped there. The agent had found piles of old rotten timbers, a grave by a spring and a wide deep track down the mountain about three miles from the agency. The timbers had been used behind wagons for brakes and had cut a large swath or road down the mountainside. Over 50 years later he heard the tale of the Blue Bucket Placer and recalled the tale told by the agent.

The story of Johnson should give new hope to the seekers of the Lost Blue Bucket Placer. The price is well worth a thorough search of the locality described by the Malheur agent.

From Desert Magazine AUGUST, 1953

Louis Comfort Tiffany Necklace, ca. 1915

GUEST: I got that in about, I would say in the late '70s or early '80s. And I got it at Robinson's department store in their estate sale department. Actually, my husband brought it home and surprised me.

APPRAISER: It was a gift from your husband?

GUEST: It was a gift.

APPRAISER: How much did he pay for it?

GUEST: It was a little over \$3,000 with tax.

APPRAISER: Uh-huh.

GUEST: And it was a lot of money to us.

APPRAISER: Tell me what you've learned about the piece since then.



Appraised By:
Christie Romero
Jewelry Director



Tiffany Black Opal Necklace

GUEST: Well, I know it's a signed Tiffany piece. I know it's handmade. At the store, they told him that it was about the 1920s.

APPRAISER: These are beautiful black opals. The larger opal is slightly crazed. The smaller opal is in perfect condition. Both opals are what are known as harlequin or patchwork opals with lots of play of color, with lots of red, which is a very desirable color. But not only is it signed "Tiffany & Co." on the bottom, looking at the back, looking at the workmanship here, tells me that the work is by Louis Comfort Tiffany.

GUEST: Really?

APPRAISER: And his work was signed "Tiffany & Co." after 1907. I believe it dates to the teens. It is beautifully handmade and a very desirable piece of jewelry. The value today is somewhere, average retail, between \$70,000 and \$90,000.

GUEST: Oh, my God. You're kidding me.

APPRAISER: It's a treasure. No, I am not kidding you.

GUEST: Say that again.

APPRAISER: Between \$70,000 and \$90,000 average retail. It's a spectacular piece of jewelry by Louis Comfort Tiffany. Thank you so much for making my day.

GUEST: Well, thank you for making my day! That's wonderful. Thank you!

APPRAISER: You're quite welcome. Oh... Was that a big surprise?

GUEST: Oh, my God.

From The Antique Roadshow, June 7, 2008

From Rags to Riches

By Peter Greisl

Chapter 30 – The New Direction

My idea of having a car generator mounted on the compressor frame had been very welcome and created quite some excitement with my peers.

I therefore left earlier and was calling on to Laszlo to see if he can help.

Laszlo was already in his work shed when I got there and I asked him if he can do this what I had drawn on a piece of paper, he looked at it and said, "This is a clever idea I can't see any problems

we just weld a couple pieces of angle iron to the frame and make a pair of clips with wire with nuts and bolts through so we can tighten and secure the generator to the frame, I got some pulleys from old cars which we can weld to the starter pulley of the compressor, so you still can pull start the compressor, then we mount a secondhand regulator out of one of those wrecks here on the back of the generator frame and run some leads off with alligator clips off it which you can attach to a battery to keep it charged all the time the compressor is running, and "Bang Bob's your Uncle and Fanny is your Aunt."

I said, "that is brilliant, but there is one more thing I would need, which is a couple old headlights I like to cut a hole in a couple pieces of ply and secure them with a couple metal straps or wire loops to the timber and run wires of it to the battery, I also need some wire, do you have any by chance? I would need about 50 meters which would then give us light in the tunnels and on top when we work at nights which we have to some times. Laszlo replied, I brought back some surplus building material which I bought in Womera when they finished a small housing estate a couple years ago, I am sure there was a roll of two core electrical cable and other electrical stuff amongst it, I never used it must be here somewhere I see if I can locate it." "My friend you are a magician, now give me the good news, how much will this set me back in the mine department, and please take in consideration our past, current and future business relationship," and I smiled at him. He grinned back and replied, "because it is you and you are a battler and nice guy, let's say the whole lot including the compressor the overhaul and this modification, the cable if I find it and a battery how about \$350.00, what do you think?" I know he wanted \$300.00 for the Compressor and Jackhammers etc., plus parts for repairs, so \$350.00 was a good price, as we are finishing up with a great piece of equipment with lighting in the shaft and tunnels.

I replied, "Laszlo if there is a heaven, I am sure I will meet you there when the time comes." "Don't hold your breath," he replied. We shook hands and he said, "Today is Wednesday, you can have the gear ready for operation by Friday arvo." I said this is great, I see you then, do you want cash or some Opal again?" "Whatever you got," he replied. I saluted, and went to the car to go to the co-op, I was cutting it fine, Doug McCallum was standing outside and greeted me, I dashed in and opened the shop quickly put my Today's Special Sign out the front and prepared the shop for trading.

I had my hands bandaged again, and I kept the bandages on for a while, Doug came in the shop and told me that Alex Dobrovski who is a Polish miner wants a small pig for a Spit Roast next weekend, I never spoke with Alex but I saw him at Gus's place several times, I said to Doug, "I got an order coming on Monday we still can get it if you can contact the supplier and order a 20 kg suckling pig." Doug replied I get straight on to it, is there anything else you need?" No I replied. He left and I continued with the preparation of the shop.

I was fairly busy today, and did not get a chance to make any sausages etc.

So I decided to stay back tomorrow night and make a batch to last me another week.

By the time 4pm came and I was cleaning the shop, Doug came in and told me the Pig was organized and coming with the next delivery on Monday.

He asked me if I was ok, as he feels I look very tired and stressed out, also he inquired what happened to my hands. Doug having a share in a claim with someone and occasionally goes and works on the claim knows what I am talking about when I told him of the disaster we experienced the last few days.

I asked him if he is concerned about the shop performance, to which he said "absolutely not the figures are always on the up," He told me I am doing an excellent job under the circumstances. I reassured him that the shop will never be neglected or my performance dropping, even though my priority is Opal Mining. He

understood and is very grateful that I show such loyalty and consciousness and he is very sorry that we don't have any shop assistant yet, to help me in the shop." "It will happen and is not such a big drama at the moment as I have Johnny working the claim on his own as much as physical possible," I replied.

I was finish and locked up and drove to the claim, when I got there, there was Johnny sitting on top of the mullock heap with a couple plastic buckets and sorting through the stuff we dumped the other night. He greeted me and said, there is some stuff amongst it a lot potch with faint hues of blue and a few pieces of jelly, quite colourful but not strong enough. I joined him and we rummaged and broke and licked the stuff and it was amazing, if all this material would have had strong colour we would had our bonanza as these two buckets were full with potch some pieces as large as packets of cigarettes.

Johnny suggested we load a lot into the mining buckets and take it home and ask Klaus if we could tumble it in their concrete mixer on the weekend.

I replied that this was a brilliant Idea, which would save a lot of time and we could be gouging for the real stuff, which we both are convinced is down there hiding and waiting for us.

So we shoveled everything which looked level material into the in to the three buckets and put them on the Ute. I told Johnny the outcome with Laszlo and he was very excited and Joked, I am glad the working conditions are improving as I would have to have a talk with my union Rep to see if he could organize a Strike." I laughed and said, "Son you got hopes,

Consider yourself lucky that you are not on piece work, or you would have been sacked by now, with your opal production."

We both laughed and after putting the buckets on the Ute we went down the shaft, lit up our lamps and crawled to the tunnel where everything was happening.

Johnny studied the opal seam, and said to me, "have you noticed every time there is no colour or no potch the seam looks much lighter not as dark as where there are some chips and potch." I agreed with him as I have noticed also, so the answer to this is of course to follow the deep brown colour.

I said to Johnny, "I like the Idea of being able to stand up and work, why don't we blast some out of the bottom to bring the opal level to our eye level, we can taper floor towards the shaft so we don't have to lift the buckets over a ledge and when we put some pipes there we should be able to push the buckets easy enough to the shaft for winching up, it would make it easier to stand up and gouge then crawling on your knees all bloody day, particular with having the Jack hammers etc., that should be easier. All it really means is a couple more buckets per foot before we get to the level."

Johnny replied, "What you saying has some merit, so let's do it and get everything ready for when we get the compressor, one thing is for sure we want have any ceiling dropping in on us as we are only blasting the bottom, we put four halve charges over distance of the tunnel at about two feet in the floor and that should blow it out easy enough as there is nothing above." I started drilling with the auger on a slight angle back so it blows it all forward to the tunnel entrance, while Johnny prepared the charges, as it was mostly clay I had no difficulty in drilling. When Johnny completed the assembly of the charges, he took over and finished the last couple of holes and placed the charges, He said, "let's grab everything as shit will be flying everywhere." We gathered our lights, lamps, tools etc. and moved them to the shaft entrance. I climbed up and Johnny followed shortly.

On the top we just waited for 4 detonations, while we waited Johnny went to the Ute and picked up the wind sock so it could be mounted on the winch after the blast.

There they were 1,2,3,4 all done, he dropped the Shute down and secured it on the winch arm and the sock started filling with fresh air and blowing it down the shaft and up came the gases from the explosion.

We waited for another 10 minutes and had a sniff at the shaft to see if we still get this pungent sulphur smell. It was very faint and not dangerous so we went down, and were pleasantly surprised it blew out just enough to fill about 12 buckets, which we cannot move as we have the level mullock in there on the back of the Ute, so we shoveled the dirt in adjoining tunnels which we don't work anymore after that we tapered the floor by chipping away to get an even surface, then we grabbed the pipes and moved them towards the tunnel we working in and it will work really well. Johnny said we still can backfill more into the tunnels we don't use anymore and there are two one on each side of the one we work in. We are now able to stand up and the level is at our eye level. The situation is now; we don't have a level above us to work with, as this one is in the buckets on the Ute. So the only thing we can do is gouge a little manually and look a bit around until we got the buckets empty and back at the claim. I said to Johnny, let's call it a day, and on the way home we can call in to Gus Place and see Klaus and Ludwig are there so we can ask them if we can use their Mixer to tumble our stuff. We packed up, I was pleased with the result of getting the mine ready for big action.

We arrived at Gus place and there were Ludwig and Klaus 4 wheel drive.

We went in and they saw us and called us across, and of course the "Hello Strangers" sounded across the room and we went over there and sat down.

Lottie came and greeted us and told me to say hello to Chris, I thanked her and ordered whatever Ludwig and Klaus were drinking and Johnny and I we had a beer each. We told them what was happening and they expressed quite some concern about the collapse. But we assured them it looks all save and sound, we also told them about the Compressor, and Klaus said he had seen it at Laszlo's as he was working on it welding some sort of frame to it.

I smiled and told them of my idea and they agreed it was a brilliant idea.

Of course we did ask about using their Concrete Mixer, and they said no problem any time, so I said to them is it ok for Johnny to come on Saturday and they agreed, I said to Johnny that Chris and I have to go shopping and then we got to go and see Doug Johnson, and Johnny agreed.

We exchanged a few more words and then we left to go home, on the way home I told Johnny that I want be coming to the claim tomorrow as I have to work back in the shop to make sausages etc., and I will be there at least till 8 or 9 pm.

"So you can have an early one, actually what you can do tomorrow Johnny is change the oil in the winch fill up everything with fuel, the Ute. Change the generator oil and fill it up also and check the water level in the tank and fill up everything." He said he will do.

Tomorrow is Thursday and on Friday we have our compressor, I will check with Laszlo tomorrow to see if everything will be ready. So Johnny can go with the Ute and pick it up. I can hardly wait till Friday to have the gear.

I am getting more exciting day by day to see my dream is fulfilled.

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Some Flexible Shaft Tricks

By Charles Lewton-Brian

As with all machinery wear eye protection at all times.

A good selection of burs may be had from your dentist. Dentists often throw out burs which still have a reasonable life left in them for a jeweler. The same goes for the probes and other tools. Some dentists are nervous about giving tools away (fear of litigation). They do however have excellent sterilizing solutions so infection should not be a worry. A good procedure is to soak them in laundry bleach (Javex®) for twenty minutes and follow by baking in your oven at a very low



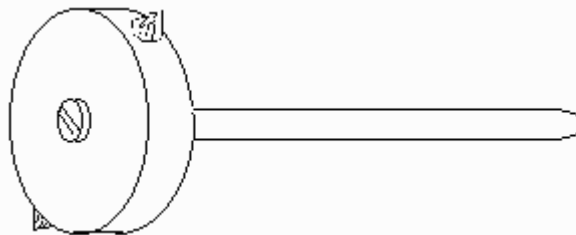
temperature (200 Deg F) for about half an hour or so. This is supposed to kill all the nasties one might encounter.

Your dentist also has a selection of diamond burs. These are excellent for working and drilling stones, especially the harder ones. They should be used with water as a cooling agent. These are extensively used in the industry for texturing gold surfaces. When the dentist thinks they are worn out they are usually still fine for goldsmiths to use. I usually contrive to use them just under water or with a constant drip.

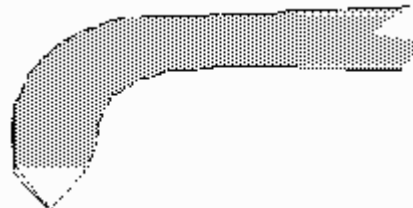
'Heatless Mizzy Wheels®' are small coarse grinding wheels that seem to generate a fair bit of heat despite their name. They give a good texture on metal similar to the diamond bur effect but much more coarse.

The flint wheel from an older style disposable Bic® lighter or a knock off is made of carbide steel in such quantities that they can be made incredibly cheaply. When the lighter is empty the top can be knocked and pried apart and the flint wheel placed on a standard screw mandrel for the flexible shaft thus making a carbide bur for texturing metal. It works like a rotary file for filing edges and coarse metal removal. Get your remaining smoker friends to save dead lighters for you. Some of the newer ones have a coiled spring rather than a wheel and they won't work. The cheap lighters you see in flea markets usually have the wheel still.

A tradesman's trick is to make an imitation of a diamond flywheel for the flexible shaft. A diamond flywheel creates extremely high polished grooves or cuts in metal surfaces. You may have seen similar cuts on certain wedding bands or on some Asian work. A manufactured one costs over a hundred dollars and Zaruba says you should buy two because one tends to break the first one quickly. The imitation works as follows. One takes a piece of metal, probably steel about the size and shape of a nickel and drills a hole through the center, mounts it on a screw mandrel and turns it true with a file while it is rotating in the flexible shaft. Then one Gypsy sets two very small, very cheap diamonds upside down (with the culets in the air) on opposite sides of the disc as shown in the diagram below. When spinning they cut bright shallow grooves into the metal surface. Wayne Mackenzie in Edmonton gypsy sets or tube sets a small diamond upside down at the end of a bent burr for a similar effect.



Another tool for creating grooves can be made by breaking the end off an old bur, heating and bending it sideways and then filing or grinding what is essentially the front end of a beveled graver onto it so that as it spins it cuts into the surface creating short nicks or grooves. It must of course be hardened and tempered. Always temper carefully. I've heard of a flex shaft tool made so that a small piece of carbide lathe tool bit is clamped into it and this functions like the one previously described.



Yet another tool for grooves, this time by making long, controllable furrows. Take a carbide wheel from an old or broken pipe cutting tool and it threads neatly onto a heavy flexible shaft screw mandrel. This makes deep grooves if pressed hard. Note that it generates a

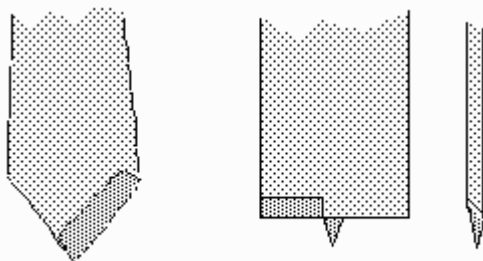
lot of heat. I think the wheel from a can opener would also work though I have not tried it.

Anything that can be mounted on a screw mandrel or placed into a flexible shaft chuck has some kind of use from wooden matches (takes the shape of what you are polishing) to pins (good for drilling into wax). A square of watercolor paper on a mandrel can be quickly trimmed into a disc while rotating with a sharp X-acto® blade (be careful!). This with a little polishing compound then becomes a great tool for polishing in hard to get at places like between prongs on a ring.

Clear plastic spring water bottles make excellent cheap disposable see through hoods and are easy to cut to shape and attach to the end of the vacuum hose for use with flexible shaft tools. They keep the dirt down from polishing.

If a lever and collet type handpiece will not handle the tools I am using I sometimes change handpieces rather than burs. I have several handpieces each with a different tool in it. One pulls the handpiece off and then mounts the next with a gentle pressure and a little rotation on the shaft. It clicks in place quickly and is faster than switching burs.

By taking a broken burr, annealing it and filing, then re-tempering to a light yellow on the tip and blue everywhere else, one can make a nice tool to bore holes for stone settings. It functions like a 'pearl drill' and looks like a miniature carpenter's spade bit. It cuts a flat bottomed hole. Remember to use care when tempering and always use safety goggles when using machinery. Another antique drill style is a 'spear bit' and like the pearl drill it is still available from European tool dealers. Both are quite fast cutting and offer some advantages over normal burs for some operations. In China goldsmiths take umbrella spokes, forge and shape them as spear bits for pump drills (bow drills). I actually learned stone setting with a pump drill-the slow speed has advantages in fostering understanding of the process.



spear bit tool pearl drill type tool

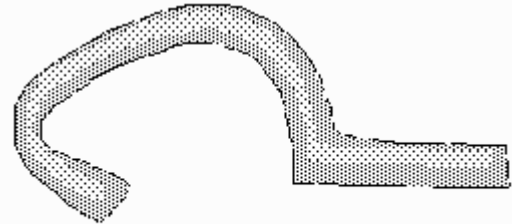
Silicon carbide separating discs are unequalled as a construction aid, cutting the time needed for installed hinge constructions to 15 minutes and box catches to an hour from start to finish. They also serve wonderfully for scoring and bending, both standard straight lines and for curves of all types. Such scored lines need soldering later to gain strength. One scores until one sees a raised line appear on the far side of the cut. If an exact bend is needed then pull scoring tools, needle files and the needle file-graver combination can be used.

Silicon carbide discs can be stacked onto a mandrel to make ploughed surfaces (such as into hammer faces to produce large stamping surfaces on old hammers) or they are available in various thicknesses including really thin ones. If you need to thin one out hold another one against it while it is rotating.

One can slit into a separating disc with another one to create three or four thin slits that run two thirds of the way to the center. This allows one to see through the disc while it is rotating.

When you break a drill it is not necessary to discard it. It is possible to re-sharpen drills, even the small ones, by using an oilstone or grinding wheel. For the proper technique see your local machinist. There is a much easier method available however. Small and larger drill bits can be sharpened easily by breaking off about a third of a

mounted separating disc with a pair of flat nosed pliers, placing it in a flex shaft chuck Use goggles! and then while it spins one can see through it (like a split lap) so that one sees what material is being taken off as it is removed. One can put a little magic marker on the ground faces of the drill bit so that one can more easily see as the steel is ground away by the disc. Test the bit to see if it bites into the metal and if it does not adjust the angles you grind it to. Sharpening drills is relatively easy. Compare with a new bit as a starting point. One can easily wind wire and cables for binding during soldering by using a hook in the flex shaft made from coat hanger wire or some equivalent.



wire-winding hook

Tubing can be cut very quickly and accurately when placed in the flexible shaft. See the section on cutting tubing for more details.

One can use a pair of side cutters or snips to cut tubing while it is rotating in the flex shaft. It simultaneously deforms the tubing inwards and makes beads with tapered ends. One can even close one end off completely by first cutting the tube with snips to bevel them inwards and then holding a piece of steel against the rotating tube end to close it, or hold it against a piece of steel. Round nose pliers held on work well. This is useful when making stick pins.

When mounting an abrasive disc or similar tool onto a flexible shaft screw mandrel, let the rotation of the tool mount it itself for you. Place the mandrel shaft into the chuck. Unscrew the retaining screw and insert it through the buff or disc being mounted. Place the end of the screw into the receiving hole on the mandrel and slowly press the foot pedal on the flexible shaft. Hold your thumb on the screw head while the shaft rotates. It quickly screws itself in. This rapidly mounts the buff or disc. Then one tightens it with a small screwdriver. It is sensible to have such a small screwdriver placed close at hand to the flexible shaft. We either drill a hole into the side of the bench and insert the shaft of the screw driver so only the handle sticks out ready to grab or use two eye screws for loops as a holster for the screw driver. As always you don't want to have to hunt for a tool or do any work to put it away.

One can place one's thumb on the cog teeth of the chuck and press the foot pedal to close the jaws quickly on a tool held between them. The moment the cogs start moving slide your thumb off them to avoid friction burns on it. Some people widen the opening over the chuck gearing so as to better place their thumb on it. I don't bother. This trick really cuts time from placing a tool into the #30 flex shaft handpiece chuck.

There are two flexible shafts hanging to my right at the bench so I don't have to change bits frequently. The handpiece and foot pedal on one of them is painted blue so I don't get mixed up when using them. I also have two Mini-Mites® on the left of my bench (rechargeable small Dremels, you have to buy a smaller collet for them to use standard 3/32 (2mm) burs). They have high speed but low torque and are good for drilling holes, sanding disc and separating disc work. Having all these tools loaded and ready to go really smoothes the working process on a piece.

Here's a rotary burnisher that you may already have that can be used for upsetting edges and filling pits in castings: use the jaws themselves as a rotary burnisher, when they are closed up tight with nothing in them. The gearing teeth of the jaws of your (#30 handpiece) flexshaft chuck can also be used in the same way.

The small screwdriver which lives just to the right of my bench pin (mainly used for flexible shaft screw mandrels) slides into a hole in the bench right up to its handle so that it is easy to get at and return to its place without being in the way too much. Close to the front of the shaft, just behind the blade I have ground two flats onto the shaft which form a scraper edge so the screwdriver can also be used as a hand-held scraper.

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January 2013 Gem & Mineral Shows

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

1-31—QUARTZSITE, AZ: Wholesale and retail show; Desert Gardens RV Park; Desert Gardens RV Park; 1055 Kuehn St.; Mon. 9-dusk, Sun. 9-dusk; free admission; crystals, minerals, rough, polished, jewelry, lapidary equipment; contact Sharon (manager), 1055 Kuehn St., Quartzsite, AZ 85346-2818, (928) 927-6361; e-mail: info@desertgardensrvpark.net; Web site: www.desertgardensrvpark.net

4-6—HILLSBORO, OR: Wholesale and retail show; Gem Faire Inc.; WA County Fairgrounds; 873 NE 34th Ave.; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$7 (3 days), children (11 and under) free; jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, more than 70 exhibitors, jewelry repair while you shop; contact Allen Van Volkinburgh, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com

4-6—MESA, AZ: 41st annual show; Flagg Mineral Foundation; Mesa Community College; SW parking lot, US 60 and Dobson; Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; free admission; Peralta Stone maps exhibit, fluorescent display, free children's activities, free samples for children and teachers, more than 100 dealers, crystals, minerals, fossils, club and museum booths; contact

Lavone Archer, (480) 969-0483; e-mail: elabaso4@cox.net; Web site: www.flaggshow.info

11-13—LARGO, FL: Annual show; Pinellas Geological Society; Largo Cultural Center; Parkside Room, 105 Central Park Dr.; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 12-5; free admission; contact Hugh Sheffield, (727) 894-2440 or (727) 707-3236

11-13—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 (3 days), children (11 and under) free; jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, more than 70 exhibitors, jewelry repair while you shop; contact Allen Van Volkinburgh, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com

18-20—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 (3 days), children (11 and under) free; jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, more than 70 exhibitors, jewelry repair while you shop; contact Allen Van Volkinburgh, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com

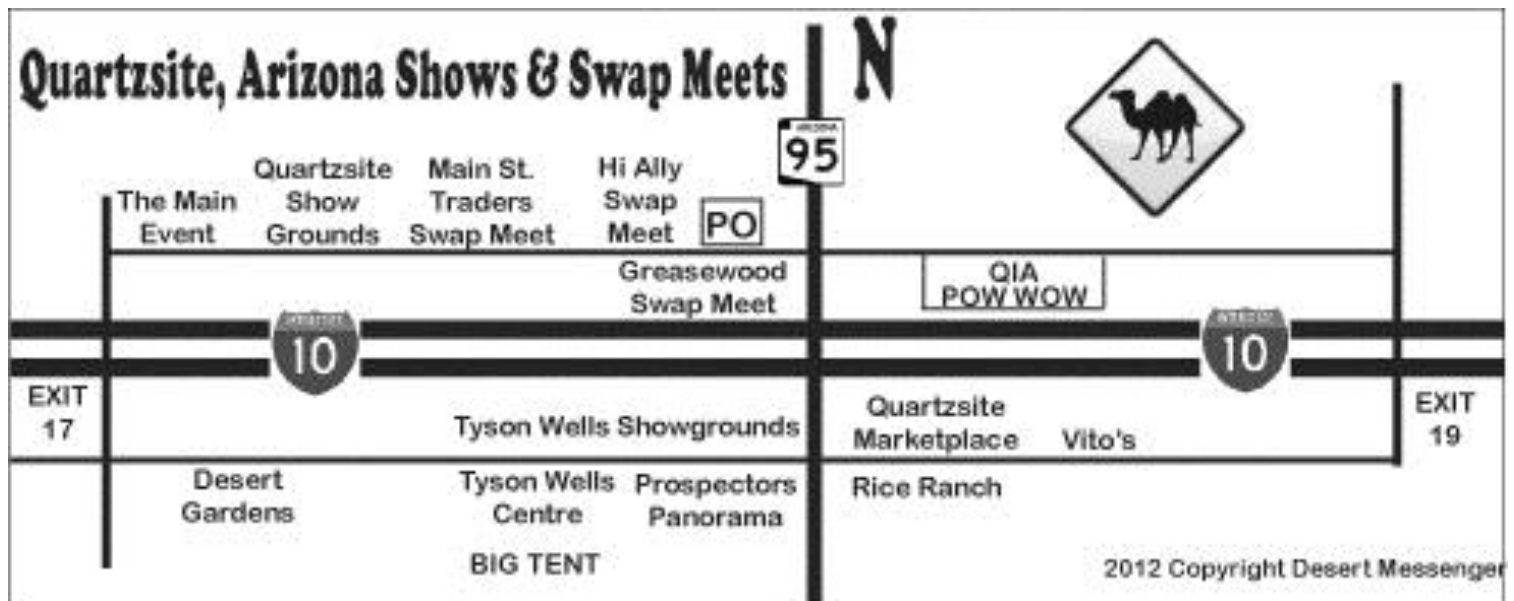
18-20—GLOBE, AZ: Annual show; Gila County Gem & Mineral Society; Gila County Fairgrounds; 3 miles northeast of Junction U.S. 60-70; Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-4; adults \$3; contact Roy Trobaugh, 738 South St., Globe, AZ 85501, (928) 200-1592; e-mail: splashcopper@yahoo.com; Web site: www.gilagem.com

25-27—SAN RAFAEL, CA: Wholesale and retail show; Gem Faire Inc.; Marin Center; 10 Avenue of the Flags; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$7 (3 days), children (11 and under) free; jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, more than 70 exhibitors, jewelry repair while you shop; contact Allen Van Volkinburgh, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com

25-17—TUCSON, AZ: Annual show; Elliot Glasser; Executive Inn; 333 S. Drachman St.; Daily 9-5; free admission; more than 130 showrooms, buy, sell, trade; contact Elliot Glasser, 6060 E. Thomas Rd., Scottsdale, AZ 85251, (602) 620-3999; e-mail: EGlasser@cox.net; Web site: USGRC@USGRC.BIZ

31-17—TUCSON, AZ: Wholesale and retail show; Eons Expos LLLP; large tent; 22nd St. at Interstate 10; Daily 9-6; free admission; 180 dealers, minerals, fossils, articulated dinosaurs, meteorites, petrified wood, amber, gems, jewelry; contact Christine Perner, (516) 818-1228; e-mail: lowellcarhart@yahoo.com; Web site: www.22ndStreetShow.com

Quartzsite 2013 Show Map



Quartzsite 2013 Show Calendar

Show / Event	Phone	Website / E-mail	Dates
TYSON WELLS ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR	928-927-6364	www.tysonwells.com	Feb.1 - Feb. 10, 2013
TYSON WELLS SELL-A-RAMA	928-927-6364	www.tysonwells.com	Jan. 18 - Jan. 27, 2013
TYSON WELLS ROCK & GEM SHOW	928-927-6364	www.tysonwells.com	Jan. 4 - Jan. 13, 2013
TYSON WELLS MARKET SQUARE	928-927-6364	www.tysonwells.com	Oct. 1, 2012 - March 30, 2013
QUARTZSITE SHOWGROUNDS	928-927-9500		Nov. 1, 2012 - April 31, 2013
Annual RICE RANCH "Yawl Come" SHOW	928-927-8118	www.riceranch.biz	Nov. 1, 2012 - Feb. 28, 2013
HI ALI SWAPMEET	928-927-6791	brocks@directtv.net	Oct. 1, 2012 - Feb. 28, 2013
MARKET PLACE SHOWGROUNDS	714-847-5074		Nov. 1, 2012 - Feb. 28, 2013
PROSPECTOR'S PANORAMA	928-927-6467		Nov. 1, 2012 - Feb. 28, 2013
GREASEWOOD SWAP	714-847-5074		Nov. 1, 2012 - Feb. 28, 2013
DESERT GARDENS ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL GEM, MINERAL & JEWELRY SHOW	928-927-6361	www.desertgardensrvpark.net dggemshow@ureach.com	Jan. 1 - Feb. 28, 2013
THE MAIN EVENT, Steam Engine Show	928-927-5213	mainevent@rraz.net	Jan. 12 - Jan. 26, 2013
44th ANNUAL Q. I. A. POW WOW	928-927-6325		Jan. 23 - Jan. 27, 2013
BIG TENT SPORTS, VACATION & R.V. SHOW	800-969-5464	www.quartzsiterivshow.com	Jan.19 - Jan. 27, 2013
BIG TENT HOBBY CRAFT & GEM SHOW	800-969-5464	www.quartzsiterivshow.com	
BIG TENT CLASSIC CAR SHOW	800-969-5464	www.quartzsiterivshow.com	Feb. 2 - Feb. 3, 2013
THE MAIN EVENT EAST	928-927-5505		Nov. 1 - Feb. 28, 2013
DESERT BLOOM ATV RALLY			Feb. 6 - Feb. 9, 2013
Q.I.A. GOLD PROSPECTORS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA			Feb. 14 - Feb. 17, 2013

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American Opal Society Membership Application

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ADDITIONAL BADGES (Your First Badge is <u>free</u> when joining)		\$10	
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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 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.

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The Opal Express

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**Volume #46 Issue #1
January 2013**

Some Topics In This Issue:

- Possible New Venue Opal & Gem Show
- Lost Blue Bucket Gold
- Louis Comfort Tiffany Necklace
- From Rags to Riches – Ch. 30 The New Direction
- Some Flexible Shaft Tricks
- Quartzsite Shows Map & Calendar

Important Dates:

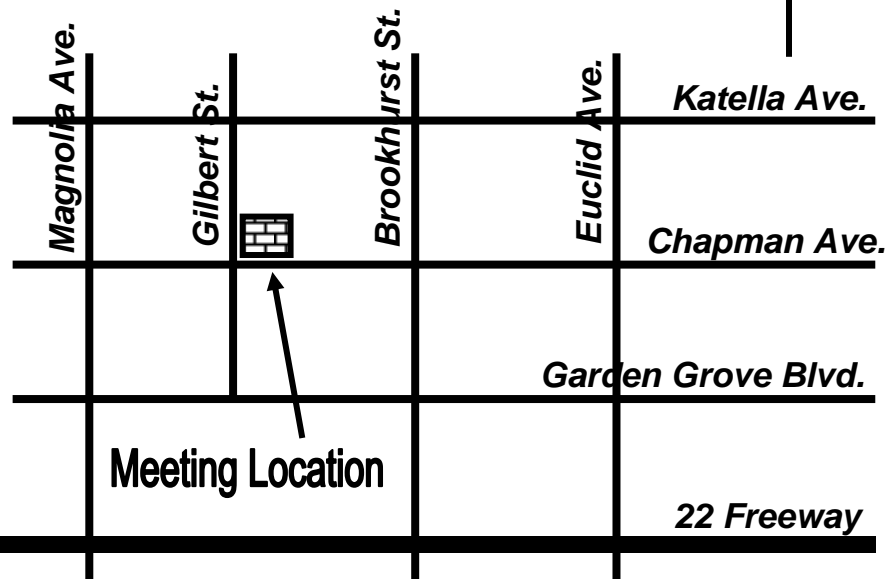
- January 7 –Board Meeting:
- January 10 - General Meeting:
Opals of the Americas, Part 2, by Jim Pisani

TO:

January 10

Opals of the Americas, Part 2

By Jim Pisani



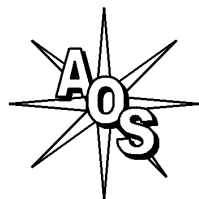
— GENERAL MEETINGS —

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



The American Opal Society

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