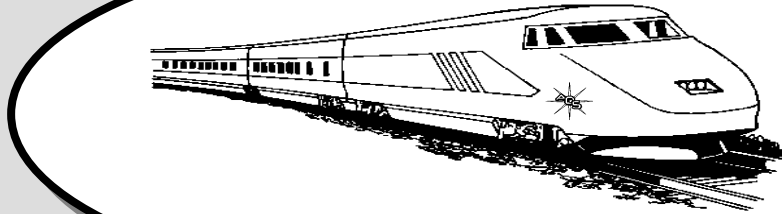


The Opal Express

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March 2014

Volume 47 Issue 3

Table of Contents

President's Message	
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Members Only Website Password	1
March Speaker: Welo Opals by Gabriel Mosesson	1
Luminescence of opals: A witness to their geochemistry	1
AOS Calendar for 2014	1
Geology of Opal Fields in the Lightning Ridge Region	2
BBQ Craft Faire and Boutique on May 10 in Anaheim	3
Opal-Mining Town Faces Exodus	4
California Couple Finds \$10M Buried Treasure in Back Yard	4
Ancient Uses of Minerals - Author Unknown	5
Tourists Duped in Fake Opal Scam	6
Australian Black Opal	6
March 2014 Gem & Mineral Shows	7

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sedimentary deposits, such as those of southern Australia. By contrast, volcanic deposits provide opals that are either inert due to their high Fe content, or fluoresce green, because of the presence of uranium. Uranium luminescence is often seen in common opal, but is almost inexistent in gem opals exhibiting diffraction of visible light. [1] Gaillou *et al.* (2008) *Ore Geology Reviews* **34**, 113–126.

From Goldschmidt Conference Abstracts 2010

AOS Calendar for 2014

American Opal Society Calendar	
Date	General Meeting Topic / Speaker
01/09/14	Gregg Bunch on Lab Created Quartz Crystals
02/13/14	Video of "Gem Hunt" on Welo Opal
03/13/14	Gabriel Mosesson on Ethiopian Welo Opal
04/10/14	To Be Announced
05/08/14	To Be Announced
06/12/14	Live Opal Auction
07/10/14	To Be Announced
08/14/14	Opal Cutting Seminar
09/11/14	To Be Announced
10/09/14	Opal & Gem Show Work Session
11/08/14	47th Annual Opal, Gem, & Jewelry Show
11/09/14	47th Annual Opal, Gem, & Jewelry Show
11/13/14	Opal Show Recap / Possible Speaker
12/11/14	AOS Christmas Party Potluck

Below is the AOS Calendar for 2014.

Members Only Website Password

AOS website's members only area: Name: "member" and Password: "opalbug".

March Speaker: Welo Opals by Gabriel Mosesson

Gabriel Mosesson of Ethiopia Imports will give a talk about the Welo Opal of Ethiopia.

Ethiopia Imports is a long standing member and Opal Show dealer. Many of us have marveled over Gabriel's Welo opal and have purchased both his rough and finished stones.

Samples of his rough and finished opal will be available for viewing and purchasing. More information can be found on their website, www.ethiopiainports.com.

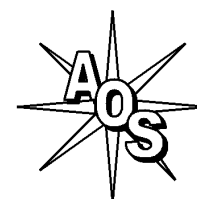
Interesting reference to opal fluorescence – The Editor

Luminescence of Opals: A Witness to Their Geochemistry

By E. Fritsch, E. Gaillou, F. Massuyeau, and B. Rondeau

There are two main features seen commonly in the ultraviolet luminescence of gem opals, one being a blue emission, the other a green one. The blue is due to a combination of two emissions with maxima at 414 and 460 nm coming from intrinsic, surface-related silica defects. The green one results from uranyl emission, if U concentration exceeds about 1 ppm. Both can be quenched by iron, if there is more than 2000 ppm present [1].

The blue luminescence of most gem opals is explained by the low levels of iron and the virtual absence of uranium in some



Geology of Opal Fields in the Lightning Ridge Region

By Matthew Goodwin

INTRODUCTION

Opal is currently being mined from depths between 1 metre (3 feet) and 30 metres (90 feet) below the surface. The opal is found in sedimentary rocks that were deposited in a freshwater environment during the Cretaceous period, about 110 million years ago. There are more than 200 distinct opal fields on the ridges of Cretaceous rocks surrounding the town of Lightning Ridge. These opal fields may be isolated or occur in groups. The main opal field "groups" are located at Lightning Ridge, Coocoran, Grawin/Carter's, Glengarry/Sheepyard, Wyoming, Jag Hill and Mehi. A number of theories, or models, exist for how opal was formed in



Nobby opal

the Lightning Ridge region.

TYPES OF OPAL

Precious opal is the valuable form of opal which shows colourful patterns that result from the diffraction of light in a process similar to how the colours of a rainbow are formed. Good quality opals will show some variation in their patterns and colours as they are viewed from different angles, for example when they are turned in the hand. **Potch, or common opal**, is generally of no value compared to precious opal as it does not show any diffraction of colour. Common



Seam opal



Sandstone (orange) overlying opal bearing claystone (lighter), Coocoran opal fields, Lightning Ridge.

opal occurs far more abundantly in the opal mines than precious opals.

Both precious and common opal is found in three major forms, or shapes;

Nobby opal is a type of opal that is found as rounded nodules from the size of a pea to as large as a potato.

Seam opal is usually found as a horizontal layer, or seam, in the opal bearing rocks.

Fossil pseudomorphs (false forms) are plant, shell, bone or teeth fossils which have been replaced by opal.

THE ROCKS IN WHICH OPAL IS FOUND

Most opal is recovered from the upper 0.3 to 0.5m of a claystone (fine grained) rock layer that is immediately overlain by a layer of sandstone (coarser grained). Opal tends to be more common in the claystone layer near faults (large cracks), blows (areas of heavily fractured rock, also known as breccia) and joints (smaller cracks) in the rock.

Currently most opal mining occurs at depths between 5m (15 feet) and 27m (80 feet) and generally involves the extraction of a single layer of opal bearing claystone. In some areas two or more layers may be mined.



Blow (light coloured circular area) about 1.2 metres across exposed in the sandstone roof of a mine, Coocoran opal fields, Lightning Ridge.

AGE OF THE ROCKS



Fault plane (smooth surface) exposed in the sandstone roof of an opal mine, Coocoran opal fields, Lightning Ridge.

Opal miners find occasional plant stems and shells which have been opalised, usually as potch but sometimes as precious opal. Rarer still are opalised bones and teeth of various vertebrate animals such as turtles, lungfish, crocodiles, pterosaurs, plesiosaurs and dinosaurs.

These and other fossils have been used to determine that the opal bearing rocks were deposited during the Cretaceous period, about 110 million years ago, in a freshwater environment.



Joints (light coloured) exposed in the sandstone roof of a mine, 3 Mile opal field, Lightning Ridge.

HOW OPAL WAS FORMED

Unlike many other minerals, relatively little is known about the processes involved the formation of opal in the Lightning Ridge region. Most miners and geologists with experience on the opal fields have their own ideas, but these can vary widely in their nature. Currently there are three major opal formation "models" that have a scientific basis and some acceptance amongst opal miners, as detailed below:

(A) Deep weathering model - During the Tertiary period the rocks which now contain opal were subject to significant weathering. Over time small amounts of silica tended to be leached from sandstone layers by water which then passed through the rock until it became trapped by underlying layers of relatively impermeable claystone.



Opalised fossils, top left - turtle vertebra, top middle - dinosaur leg bone, top right - gastropod (water snail), bottom left - pine cone, bottom right - lungfish tooth plate.

Under the right chemical and physical conditions opal was precipitated from the water in porous areas or voids.

There is a tendency for opal to be found close to faults in the rock layers and near "blows" (disturbed ground). If this model is correct then these faults and blows would have provided paths for water containing silica to flow along.

(B) Syntectonic (Pecover) model - Opal was deposited by heated water under pressure which originated from underground. The water tended to flow preferentially along faults and blows and deposit opal nearby.

(C) Microbe model - Opal bearing claystones commonly contain substantial amounts of fine, fossilised organic matter. Various types of microbe fossils, primarily aerobic (air dependent) bacteria, have also been identified as fossils within opal. Although the microbe fossils are not visible to the naked eye, microscopic studies have shown them to be quite abundant.

Under this model the ongoing feeding and waste production processes of the microbes, while they were alive, created favourable physical and chemical conditions for the formation of opal.

Ultimately each of the above models for opal formation has its strengths and weaknesses, with more scientific research required to clarify whether opal has formed by one process or a mixture.

MORE INFORMATION

The following books and papers will provide more information on the geology of the Lightning Ridge opal fields.

- The New Syntectonic Model of Origin to Explain The Formation of Opal Veins,
- Breccia Pipes and Faults at Lightning Ridge, Pecover, S.R., 1999, Opal Ventures N.L., Sydney.
- Cretaceous Microbes – Producer of Black Opal at Lightning Ridge, **NSW, Australia**, Behr, H.J., Behr, K. & Watkins, J.J., 2000 Unpublished paper.
- Future Prospects for Opal Mining in the Lightning Ridge Region, Watkins, J.J., 1985, Department of Mineral Resources.
- **Black Opal Fossils of Lightning Ridge**, Smith, E. & Smith, R. 1999, Kangaroo Press, East Roseville, NSW.

From <http://www.wj.com.au/mining/lrgeology.html>

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 From our Anaheim Arts Council involvement - The Editor

BBQ Craft Faire and Boutique on May 10 in Anaheim

WAND Chairman and Event Chairman Esther Wallace and the WAND COUNCIL invite you to join our 18th Annual Anaheim Western BBQ CRAFT FAIRE and BOUTIQUE!

THE EVENT: This community event will take place on Saturday, May 10, 2014 at Twila Reid Park (3100 W. Orange Avenue Anaheim, between Beach Boulevard and Western Avenue) from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This day-long event drew over 4000 residents last year to enjoy a day of fun for the entire family!

Again, this year our WAND committee (a group of community volunteers) expects to have a larger Western Barbecue featuring the So Cal Galaxies Ford Car Show. The day will include barbecue food, bingo, entertainment from community events, exhibits by local community organizations such as the Anaheim Police, Fire and Code Preservation Departments, children's crafts, games and activities, pony rides...and a craft fair!

This Craft Faire and Business vendor participation is a vital element of our event and we would like to extend an invitation to you to be a part of this year's event. With the anticipated increase in attendees, this is an excellent opportunity to showcase your wares and services!

This event is held in a park and the grounds are uneven. Booths are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. To confirm your participation, please return the enclosed Application Form with your check for \$35.00 by the APRIL 25th deadline. Post deadline fee (May 1st - 7th) is \$45.00. Fees payable to Anaheim Community Foundation. The foundation, a non-profit organization - tax I.D. number 33-0033023, acts as our fiscal agent so your donation is tax deductible. Priority of location will be given based on receipt of the completed form and check.

If you have any questions, you can reach our event coordinator, Carol Latham at (714) 774 - 3724 or wandbbq@yahoo.com or WAND Chairman, Esther Wallace at eswall@msn.com or (714) 609-8070

Forms may also be printed from our website www.wandcouncil.org. We look forward to having you as a vendor at our 18th Annual Western BBQ!

West Anaheim Neighborhood Development Council (WAND)
Community Participation Committee
"For Building a Greater Anaheim"

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Opal Mining Town Faces Exodus

Mark Schliebs, [The Australian](#) July 18, 2012

Mintabie Miners Progress Association president Lee Craggs on the road to Mintabie, which has come under a new regime. Picture: Kelly Barnes Source: The Australian

AN opal-mining town on Aboriginal land faces an exodus if new laws requiring police checks for residents and a ban on drinking in households are enforced, a community leader says.

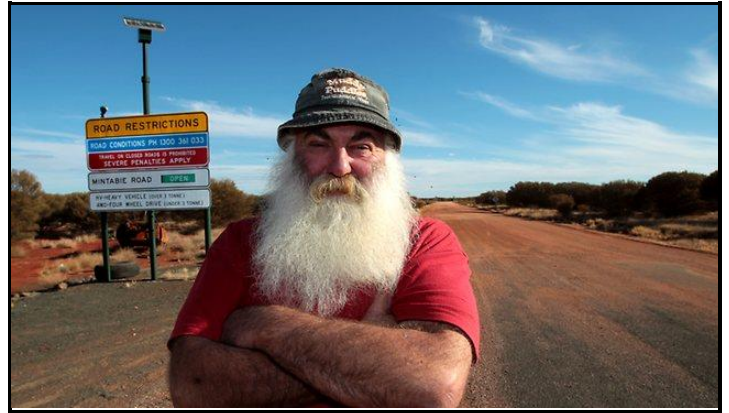
The new regime for the Mintabie Township came into effect on July 1, but Mintabie Miners Progress Association president Lee Craggs said some aspects were largely being ignored.

He would not say whether residents of the town in far-northern South Australia were continuing to drink alcohol at home. "Things haven't changed," Mr Craggs said. "We're just sitting here, trading water.

"Mintabie has been a township for over 40 years and all of a sudden they tell us we can't drink and we've got to have police checks to be here and all sorts of things."

Residents have engaged Adelaide barrister Jonathan Wells QC in an attempt to have the laws struck down.

Mintabie residents have long been accused of supplying drugs and alcohol to Aboriginal people of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands, on which the town sits, and the business practices of its stores have been criticized by the Rann, Weatherill and Gillard governments.



Mintabie Miners Progress Association president Lee Craggs

Few, if any, Aboriginal people live in the town, which is a collection of sheds, shacks and small hills of mined dirt.

Under the new laws and regulations, a potential resident must apply for a license to live there and be subjected to police checks.

Licenses are now required to operate businesses in an attempt to "eliminate inappropriate and/or illegal commercial and credit practices", according to the Weatherill government. Stores in Mintabie regularly hold the ATM cards of customers on the APY Lands as part of arrangements allowing purchases on credit.

The town's pub will not be affected by the new rules as it has never sold takeaway alcohol.

Mr Craggs said the alcohol bans and police check requirements in particular would result in many of the town's 200 residents leaving.

"If we're not successful in our challenge, I'll certainly reconsider my position," he said.

"At a stroke of a politician's pen, it's turned the place into somewhere I don't want to be."

A spokeswoman for the state government's Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation division said an officer would be sent to nearby Umuwa to make sure the new regime was enforced.

"There will be a transition period for the new provisions with progress to be monitored and it is expected that these new provisions will be enforced," she said.

Police Minister Jennifer Rankine said the nearby town of Marla had five officers who would enforce laws in Mintabie.

Mr Craggs said the laws could change the relaxed nature of the town.

"What attracted me to this place was that it was laid-back and it didn't matter if you parked on the wrong side of the road," he said.

From <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/opal-mining-town-faces-exodus/story-fn59niix-1226428535973#>

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California Couple Finds \$10M Buried Treasure in Back Yard

By [Dina Abou Salem](#) | [ABC News Blogs](#)



California Couple Finds \$10M Buried Treasure in Back Yard (ABC News)

A California couple spotted the edge of an old can on a path they had hiked many times before. Poking at the can was the first step in uncovering a buried treasure of rare coins estimated to be worth \$10 million.

"It was like finding a hot potato," the couple told coin expert Dr. Don Kagan from Kagin's, Inc. The couple hired the president of Kagin's, Inc. and Holabird-Kagin Americana, a western Americana dealer and auctioneer, to represent them.

"Since 1981, people have been coming to us with one or two coins they find worth a few thousand dollars, but this is the first time we get someone with a whole cache of buried coins... It is a million to one chance, even harder than winning the lottery," Kagan told ABCNews.com.

The couple is trying to remain anonymous after finding the five cans of coins last spring on their Tiburon property in northern California and conducted an interview with Kagin.

"I never would have thought we would have found something like this. However, in a weird way I feel like I have been preparing my whole life for it," the couple said.

Credit: Saddle Ridge Hoard discoverers via Kagin's, Inc./AP Photo "I saw an old can sticking out of the ground on a trail that we had walked almost every day for many, many years. I was looking down in the right spot and saw the side of the can. I bent over to scrape some moss off and noticed that it had both ends on it," they said.

It was the first of five cans to be unearthed, each packed with gold coins.

"Nearly all of the 1,427 coins, dating from 1847 to 1894, are in uncirculated, mint condition," said Kagan told ABCNews.com.

He said Tuesday that the couple plan to sell most of the coins, but before they do, they are "loaning some to the American Numismatic Association for its National Money Show, which opens Thursday in Atlanta."

"Some of the rarest coins could fetch as much as \$1 million apiece," said Kagan. He also said that they wish to sell 90 percent of the collection through Amazon.com and on the company's website.

"We'd like to help other people with some of this money. There are people in our community who are hungry and don't have enough to eat. We'll also donate to the arts and other overlooked causes. In a way it has been good to have time between finding the coins and being able to sell them in order to prepare and adjust. It's given us an opportunity to think about how to give back," said the couple.

Kagan and his colleague David McCarthy, senior numismatist and researcher at Kagin's, met with the couple last April, two months after the hoard was found.

When McCarthy and Kagan told the couple that their bonanza will be in the annals of numismatic stories for quite some time, the couple said, "It would have been quite a pity not to share the magnitude of our find. We want to keep the story of these coins intact for posterity."



Credit: Saddle Ridge Hoard discoverers via Kagin's, Inc./AP Photo From <http://gma.yahoo.com/blogs/abc-blogs/california-couple-finds-10m-buried-treasure-back-yard-212612549--abc-news-topstories.html>

Ancient Uses of Minerals

It has always been interesting to learn about the strange ways in which minerals have been used. Tin, for instance, has been known for thousands of years. The Phoenicians and other ancient people mined it in the famous mines in Corn-wall, England...and from that time to this, tin has been an important metal in the progress of civilization. But perhaps the most unusual use of tin was as an additive to put rustle in silk cloth. The luxurious swish of a lady's skin in the era of elaborate clothes at the turn of the century was produced by a silk that was up to 25% tin, by weight.

One of the strangest uses of lead ever recorded is found in the story of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. This wonder of the ancient world was contained in a square 400 feet on each side and built up as several large terraces which attained the height of the city walls. The whole structure is supported by arches, one above the other, strengthened by a wall 22 feet thick surrounding it on all sides. On top were first laid large flat stones, 16 feet long and 4 feet wide; over these were laid a layer of reeds mixed with a great quantity of bitumen upon which were set 2 rows of bricks cemented closely together. The whole was covered with thin sheets of lead which laid the mold of the garden and soil deep enough to take the roots of the biggest trees. Amyitis, wife of Nebuchadnezzar, longed for the hills and her husband, to please her, built this magnificent structure. This ancient garden with its lead shielding suggests a modern bomb shelter.

We are all familiar with the crystal ball of the fortune teller, cut from flawless quartz. Another more practical use for these smooth spheres was discovered by the oriental needle workers. These women, skilled in the art of fine embroidery, used the balls to cool their hands and prevent moisture from soiling the fine silks on which they worked.



Tin

The long slender crystal selenites from the Cave of the Swords at Naica in Chihuahua, Mexico, are beautiful to look at but they too have been put to a practical use. Some of these crystals retain the water of crystallization in the form of a bubble in which the water moves as it is tipped to and fro. These crystals have been used as hand levels by the native miners.

Via *The Golden Nugget*—>From *Moroks newsletter 2/2014*

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Tourists Duped in Fake Opal Scam

By *Tory Shepherd*, *The Advertiser*, May 22, 2009



A synthetic opal, left, and the real thing. Source: *The Advertiser*

FAKE opals are being peddled to tourists in Coober Pedy.

As the quality of the synthetic stones improves, they are being sold to unwary customers.

It is understood slabs of the synthetic material are made overseas and shipped in before being processed and sold.

Customers only find out they have been duped if they take their stone to be valued.

Federal Member for Grey Rowan Ramsey says genuine opal dealers want to put a stop to the practice because it is damaging the industry's reputation and driving down prices.

"It's clearly illegal, but it's difficult to police," he said.

"The synthetics now are very good. If a young couple was to buy a diamond engagement ring only to find out its cubic zirconia, they'd be pretty disappointed."

Mr Ramsey has been meeting with the Coober Pedy Opal Miners Association and the Jewelers Association of Australia to discuss a possible accreditation for opals and an industry code of practice.

He says any synthetic opals would then have to be clearly identified as such.

Local bed-and-breakfast owner Ken Male showed *The Advertiser* a synthetic opal, which had deep colours but felt like plastic.

It would be processed, sliced, put on a backing and set in jewellery so the difference was concealed, he said.

Mr Male said he knew of two or three stores selling fake opals as real.

"The ordinary person wouldn't have a clue," he said.

"We know it goes on in the industry but there's nothing we as individuals can do except try to make the public aware."

He said many people in the town were concerned about damage to their reputation.

"It's bad news... because people come here and expect to purchase genuine opal and they walk away with synthetic opal," he said.

Comments on this story

Judi of Adelaide Posted at 7:04 AM May 22, 2009

I saw opals that looked like that in Andamooka recently. They were marked as "Canadian Opals" and while I was very interested in their different colours and markings, I was buying Andamooka opals for family members overseas, so I didn't bother looking any closer.

Robert of Roxby Posted at 8:33 AM May 22, 2009

Was here in Adelaide about 5 or 6 years ago when I witnessed an attendant sell a Gilsons opal as real opal to a tourist it is not only Coober Pedy this has been going on. Be sure of what you buy keep receipts get it valued.

Willem van den Broek of Vietnam Posted at 8:51 AM May 22, 2009

A simple solution would be to strike a match and hold it close to the opal, before buying. If it melts it is fake. I have done this many times when buying gemstones and on a few occasions the seller asked me: What are you doing? Adding you can't do that! Obviously they were trying to sell me a fake. So buyer beware.

Coober Pedy Resident of Coober Pedy Posted at 3:50 PM May 22, 2009

What a load of BULLSxxT! How can a professional journalist put something like this in the paper? Coober Pedy is one of the places that a tourist can buy (authentic) opal cheaper than anywhere else. Most of the people selling opal in Coober Pedy have been there for a long time and THIS IS THEIR LIFE. THEY LOVE OPAL! If there are one or two opal shops that sell synthetic you cannot rubbish the whole town. There are more than 30 opal shops! Your paper should apologize to Coober Pedy and the people involved in the opal industry!

Jim of North Adelaide Posted at 4:38 PM May 22, 2009

Are opals still in fashion? Anyway if you can't tell the difference what does it matter?

From <http://www.adelaidenow.com.au>

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Australian Black Opal

Jan. 12, 2011

O, the power of the pen. With just one strange plot twist in his 1829 bestseller, "Anne of Geierstein," Sir Walter Scott destroyed the European opal market for nearly 50 years. And he did it just by having a character falsely accused of being a demoness die shortly after a chance drop of holy water fell on her opal and quenched its mysterious, fiery color. Convinced Scott was warning them that wearing opal could bring bad luck,



suggestible readers stopped buying the gem. Within a matter of months, the opal market had crashed and prices were down more than 50 percent.

It took a remarkable find of black opal at Lightning Ridge in New South Wales, Australia, in 1877, to revive the market for this gem. Australia's spectacular new opals took the world by storm. Indeed, there have been almost no opals found in the last 50 years to match what came from Lightning Ridge in its late nineteenth and early twentieth century heyday. No wonder dealers sometimes liken Lightning Ridge's impact and significance to that of Kashmir for sapphire, a Himalayan source discovered around the same time, that set the standard for sapphire in the same way Lightning Ridge did for opal.

Lightning Strikes Once

Black opal is far rarer than white opal. In fact, there are only two active black opal localities in the world, both in Australia. Of the two, the older, Lightning Ridge, is said to be the only one to produce true black opal. The other, Mintabe, is known more for gray-to-grayish-black material. Some purists even protest calling Mintabe stones black opal. They do so on both geological and aesthetic grounds.

Traditionally, black opal was considered a variety of opal found in rock formations called nodules (or "nobbies" in the trade) as opposed to white opal, which is found in seams. But when Mintabe, whose opal is also found in seams, was discovered, this geology-based distinction began to blur- at least among dealers.

One can see why opal dealers insist that Mintabe's dark- gray material be accorded full standing as black opal. If they had to restrict their definition to goods from fast-depleting Lightning Ridge, the future of this gem would be in grave doubt. For even when production from Lightning Ridge and Mintabe are pooled together, there is still far less black than white opal. Given its relative scarcity, black opal has never lent itself to volume jewelry use the way white opal has. As a result, black opal remains primarily a special order stone in this country. But the few who buy it here generally look for the same things the Japanese do: base color, hue mixture and color pattern.

Basics of Opal Beauty

When dealers evaluate black opal, they start with its base color. The darker the base- or what dealers call "potch"- of an opal, the more pronounced and vivid its color. That's because an opal's beauty is the product of the contrast between its color play and its background.

As for ideal color in black opal, most experts look for the predominance of red and then orange. "Stones that appear all or almost all red are the most coveted," one dealer explains. "Increasing amounts of blue and green will reduce their value."

But specific color isn't all that connoisseurs want in a fine black opal. The pattern that they take is equally important. For years, the most prized pattern was what dealers call the "harlequin": well-defined squares, rectangles, triangles or diamonds of color in both symmetrical and asymmetrical designs.

Today, unfortunately, the harlequin pattern is encountered only in older pieces. No new stones with this pattern have been mined in years. Failing to find stones with big blocks or even chunks of color, connoisseurs must content themselves instead with swirls. Often you'll hear them describe the best patterns that can be hoped for in black opal today as stones that exhibit broad well-defined flashes of color (called "rolling flash" in the trade) that change kaleidoscopically as stones are turned in the hand. Yet even these patterns are far from plentiful.

Realistically, the top black opals that consumers are likely to be offered nowadays feature color patterns comprised, at their best, of lively pointillistic dots. As these dots get smaller and less vivid, they come to resemble what the trade calls "pin fire." Such black opals are the most commonly found and least expensive.

From <http://www.modernjeweler.com/>

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March 2014 Gem & Mineral Shows

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

6-9—VICTORVILLE, CA: Tailgate; Victor Valley Gem & Mineral Club; Stoddard Wells; off I-15 on Stoddard Wells Rd.; Thu. 9-5, Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; free admission; field trips, more than 50 dealers; contact Brett Ward, 15056 - B 7th St., Victorville, CA 92395, (760) 243-2330; e-mail: info@vvgmc.org; Web site: www.vvgmc.org

7-9—NORTH APPLE VALLEY (COUNTY), CA: 38th Annual Outdoor Tailgate; Victor Valley Gem & Mineral Club; Stoddard Wells Rd.; northeast of Victorville, I-15 Exit 157, drive 12 miles northeast (graded dirt last 7 mi.); Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; free admission; rough materials, handcrafted and faceted jewelry, findings, equipment, minerals, fossils, collecting at the Verde Antique marble quarry, tri-color marble field trip Sat., map on Web site;

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contact Brett Ward, 15056 B 7th St., Victorville, CA 92392, (760) 243-2330; Web site: www.vvgmc.org

7-9—PLEASANTON, CA: Wholesale and retail show; Gem Faire Inc.; Alameda County Fairgrounds; 4501 Pleasanton Ave.; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$7, children (0-11) free; fine jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, exhibitors, jewelry repair while you shop, door prizes; contact Yooy Nelson, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com

8-9—SAN MARINO, CA: 56th Annual Gem & Mineral Show; Pasadena Lapidary Society; San Marino Masonic Center; 3130 Huntington Dr.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; free admission; "Nature's Palette of Gems and Minerals": dealers, gems, minerals, beads, jewelry, fossils, displays, kids' games, silent auction, raffle, lapidary demonstrations; contact Marcia Goetz, (626) 260-7239; Web site: www.pasadenalapidarysociety.org

8-9—SPRECKELS, CA: Annual show; Salinas Valley Rock & Gem Club; Spreckels Vets Hall; 5th St. and Llano St.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; free admission; door prizes, raffle, dealers, rough rock, slabs, finished jewelry, fossils, gems, beads, findings, cab making demonstration, bug beads, silent auction, wheel of fortune, tumbled stone bags, case displays; contact Karin Salomon, CA, (831) 375-5233; e-mail: kl.salomon72@yahoo.com; Web site: salinasrockandgem.com

8-9—TURLOCK, CA: Annual show; Mother Lode Mineral Society; Stanislaus County Fairgrounds; 900 N. Broadway; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; adults \$6, children (under 12) free with adult; more than 40 dealers, rocks, minerals, fossils, jewelry, beads, supplies, fluorescents, jewelry-making demonstrations, fluorescent display tent, children's activities, bracelet making, soapstone carving; contact Bud or Terry McMillin, (209) 524-3494; Web site: www.turlockgemshow.com

14-16—ALBUQUERQUE, NM: 45th Annual Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Expo; Jay Penn; Expo NM State Fairgrounds; Creative Arts Bldg., 300 San Pedro NE; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$3 (\$1 on Fri.), children (under 13) free; Treasures of the Earth: 40 dealers, gemstones, mineral specimens, jewelry, beads, cabochons, carvings, fossils, meteorites, books, raffles, door prizes, silent auctions, mineral ID, displays; contact Paul Hlava, (505) 265-4178; e-mail: paulhlava@q.com; Web site: www.agmc.info

14-16—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, children (0-11) free; fine jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, exhibitors, jewelry repair while you shop, door prizes; contact Yooy Nelson, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com

14-16—SPANISH FORK, UT: Annual show; Timpanogos Gem & Mineral Society; Spanish Fork Fair Grounds; 475 S. Main St., indoor tennis court; Fri. 10-7, Sat. 10-7, Sun. 10-5; free admission; "Spring Parade of Gems": Mr. Bones, junior club booth, display cases, handmade jewelry, gems, minerals, fossils, lapidary supplies, dealers, demonstrators, grab bags, black light display, educational displays, silent auction, rough rock, Spinning Wheel; contact Keith Fackrell, 2295 E. 700 S., Springville, UT 84663, (801) 592-0410; e-mail: timprocks@gmail.com; Web site: www.timprocks.weebly.com

15-16—COTTONWOOD, AZ: Show and sale; CKM Productions, LLC; Mingus High School; 1801 E. Fir St.; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-4; adults \$3, children (under 12) free; dealers, jewelry, gems, minerals, raffles; contact Gayle Macklin, PO Box 21222, Sedona, AZ 86341, (520) 921-0100; e-mail: gayleis@gmail.com

15-16—GAITHERSBURG, MD: Annual show; Gem, Lapidary & Mineral Society of Montgomery Co.; Montgomery County Fairgrounds; 16 Chestnut St.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 11-5; adults \$6, children (11 and under) free; more than 45 exhibits, door prizes, demonstrations, free workshop, free kids' specimens, Mini-Mine, fluorescent mineral tent, raffle, 20 dealers, discount flier on Web site; contact George Durland, 8600 Bunnell Dr., Potomac, MD 20854; e-mail: GDurland1@verizon.net; Web site: www.glmcmc.com

15-16—KALISPELL, MT: 7th Annual Rock and Mineral Show; Northwest MT Rock Chucks; Flathead County Fairgrounds; Grandstand Bldg., 265 N. Meridian Rd.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; adults \$1; children's activities and demonstrations, beads, rock slabs, specimen rocks, jewelry, gold; contact Joe Berg, PO Box 5541, Kalispell, MT 59903, (406) 844-3560

15-16—LEMOORE, CA: Annual show; Lemoore Gem & Mineral Club; Trinity Hall; 470 Champion St.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; free admission; rocks, lapidary rough and supplies, gems, minerals, beads, fossils, jewelry, reference books, rock-cutting demonstrations; contact Ghris Wertemberger, PO Box 455, Lemoore, CA 93245, (559) 309-3433; e-mail: georgersilva@sbcglobal.net

15-16—SEATTLE, WA: Annual show; North Seattle Lapidary & Mineral Club; Lake City Community Center; 12531 28th Ave. NE; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; free admission; junior activities, demonstrations, club member displays, grab bags, Rockosaurus rides, Rockhound Dinner, dealers, door prizes; contact

Susan Gardner, (425) 483-2295; e-mail: sgardner3@mindspring.com; Web site: www.NorthSeattleRockClub.org
 15-16—VALLEJO, CA: Annual show; Vallejo Gem & Mineral Society; Solano County Fairgrounds, Mc Cormack Hall; 900 Fairgrounds Dr.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; adults \$5, children (under 12) free with adult; "Spring Bling": jewelry, beads, necklaces, turquoise, jade, minerals, fossils, crystals, demonstrators, kids' activities; contact Dan Wolke, (707) 334-2950; e-mail: dncwolke@sbcglobal.net; Web site: vjgems.org
 lburtr@juno.com; Web site: rockhobby.stleearthsci.org
 22-23—ANGELS CAMP, CA: Annual Calaveras Gem and Jewelry Show; Calaveras Gem & Mineral Club; Calaveras County Fairgrounds; 101 Frogtown Rd.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; adults \$4, and students (13 over), children (12 and under) free with adult; exhibits, jewelry, carvings, faceted gemstones, polished rocks, demonstrators, faceting, wire wrapping, chain fabrication, flint knapping, hard rock carving, dealers, jewelry-making supplies and tools, beads, minerals, gemstones, handcrafted jewelry, meteorites, fossils; contact Anna Christiansen, 245 N. 6th Ave., Oakdale, CA 95361, (209) 847-1173; e-mail: achrist361@sbcglobal.net; Web site: www.calaverasgemandmineral.org
 22-23—PORT ANGELES, WA: 4th Annual Rock, Gem & Jewelry Show; Port Angeles Parks & Recreation; Vern Burton Community Center; 308 E. 4th St.; Sat. 9-6, Sun. 10-5; free admission; rough and polished rocks, thunder eggs, carvings, beads, fused glass, faceted gemstones, crystals, fossils, minerals, woodworking; contact Cindy Kochanek, PO Box 1150, Port Angeles, WA 98362; e-mail: ckochanek@cityofpa.us
 22-23—ROSEVILLE, CA: 52nd Annual Show; Roseville Gem & Mineral Society; Roseville (Placer County) Fairgrounds; 800 All America City Blvd., off WA; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; adults \$6, seniors \$5, children (12 & under) free; inside and outside, more than 50 dealers, crystals, beads, minerals, gemstones, meteorites, jewelry, fossils, activities, more than 35 exhibits, gold panning, kids' "Education Station", Scout activities, polished stones, jade, opal, world-class mineral specimens, tourmaline, gold, petrified wood, demonstrations, silent auctions, metal detecting, free gem and mineral ID, raffle, door prizes, lapidary shop open house; contact Gloria Marie, PO Box 1547, Foresthill, CA 95631, (916) 216-1114; e-mail: gloriarosevillerockrollers@gmail.com; Web site: www.rockrollers.com
 28-30—SANDY, UT: Wholesale and retail show; Gem Faire Inc.; South Towne Expo Center; 9575 S. State St.; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$7, children (0-11) free; fine jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks,

minerals, exhibitors, jewelry repair while you shop, door prizes; contact Yooy Nelson, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com
 28-30—SPOKANE, WA: Annual show; Rock Rollers of Spokane; Spokane County Fair & Expo Center; N.604 Havana; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; adults \$6, seniors \$5, children (12 and under) free; more than 40 dealers, 60 display cases, fossils, crystals, minerals, specimens, handcrafted jewelry, lapidary supplies, demonstrations, hourly door prizes, youth activities, grand prize; contact David Rapp, (509) 891-6533; e-mail: showchair@rockrollers.org
 29-30—BELLINGHAM, WA: Annual show; Mt. Baker Rock & Gem Club; Bloedel Donovan Community Center; 2214 Electric Ave.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; free admission; gold panning, lapidary demonstrations, fluorescent show, rocks, minerals, fossils, gems, jewelry, club sales, dealers, door prizes, scholarship raffle, silent auction, exhibits, kids' activities; contact Sheri Clark, (360) 510-6483; e-mail: mamacat0849@gmail.com; Web site: www.mtbakerrockclub.org
 29-30—NORTHAMPTON, MA: Western Mass Mineral, Jewelry & Fossil Show; CT Valley Mineral Club; Clarion Hotel & Conference Center; 1 Atwood Dr.; Sat. 9:30-5, Sun. 10-4; adults \$5, children (12 and under) and Scouts in uniform free with adult; minerals, gemstones, jewelry, crystals, beads, fossils, lapidary and mineral art, demonstrations, exhibits; contact Jeff Kontoff, (413) 594-2336; e-mail: info@westernmassmineralshow.com; Web site: www.westernmassmineralshow.com
 29-30—SWEET HOME, OR: Annual show; Sweet Home Rock & Mineral Society; Sweet Home High School Activity Gym; 1641 Long St.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults 50 cents, children (12 and under) free with adult; raffle, displays, dealers, door prizes, demonstrations; contact Joe Cota, PO Box 2279, Lebanon, OR 97355, (541) 451-2740
 29-30—TORRANCE, CA: 65th annual ; South Bay Lapidary & Mineral Society; Ken Miller Recreation Center; 3341 Torrance Blvd., entrance on Madrona Ave.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; free admission; door prizes, special guest exhibitors and demonstrators, fluorescent mineral exhibit, petrified forest display, polished stones, rough rock and slabs, Artisans Store featuring handmade jewelry, silent auction; contact Craig Polliard, (310) 533-4931; e-mail: CraigPolliard@yahoo.com; Web site: www.palosverdes.com/sblap

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<p align="center">TIKKA OPALS</p> <p align="center">E-mail: mattitikka@bigpond.com.au</p> <p align="center">www.tikkaopalsaustralia.com</p> <p align="center">phone: +61-7-55469324 mobile: +61-417-421205</p>	<p align="center">Advertise in this Space!</p> <p align="center">Business Card Size: \$ 5 per month Quarter Page Size: \$10 per month Half Page Size: \$20 per month Full Page Size: \$40 per month</p> <p align="center"><i>Contact:</i> The Opal Express C/O Jim Pisani P.O. Box 4875 Garden Grove, CA 92842-4875 <i>E-mail: editor@opalsociety.org</i></p>

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 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.

NAME			
BUSINESS NAME			
ADDRESS		APT # or PO BOX	
CITY		STATE	
ZIP or POSTAL CODE		COUNTRY (IF OUTSIDE USA)	
PHONE - Home ()	PHONE - Business ()	FAX ()	
E-MAIL			
WEBSITE			
OCCUPATION		HOBBIES AND INTERESTS	

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 _____

<p>The Opal Express is published monthly by The American Opal Society. Copyright 2014. All rights reserved. <i>Non-Commercial Reprint Permission Granted Unless Otherwise Reserved.</i> Editor-Jim Pisani <i>Please address all inquiries and exchange newsletters to:</i> The Opal Express C/O Jim Pisani P.O. Box 4875 Garden Grove, CA 92842-4875 E-mail: editor@opalsociety.org</p>	<p>Are Your Dues Due Now? PLEASE CHECK YOUR ADDRESS LABEL or NEWSLETTER E-MAIL. There should be a date that shows the current month/year of your membership. If the date is older than the current date, your dues are overdue. A warning will be stated if you are overdue. A Renewal Grace Period of two months will be provided. Please note, however, that as the system is now set up, if your renewal is not received you will be AUTOMATICALLY dropped from membership thereafter. It is your responsibility to assure your dues are current. Thank you, <i>The Editor</i></p>
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The Opal Express

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

**Volume #47 Issue #3
March 2014**

Some Topics In This Issue:

- Luminescence of opals
- Geology of Lightning Ridge Opal
- BBQ Craft Faire May 10 in Anaheim
- Opal Mining Town Faces Exodus
- California Couple Finds \$10M
- Ancient Uses of Minerals
- Tourists Duped in Fake Opal Scam
- Australian Black Opal

Important Dates:

March 13 - General Meeting:

Gabriel Mosesson of Ethiopia Imports (www.ethiopiainports.com) will speak on the mining, history and properties of the unique Ethiopian Welo Opal.

Rough and finished opal will be for viewing and purchasing.

— GENERAL MEETINGS —

2nd Thurs. of the Month
7:30 pm - 9:30 PM

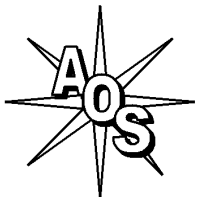
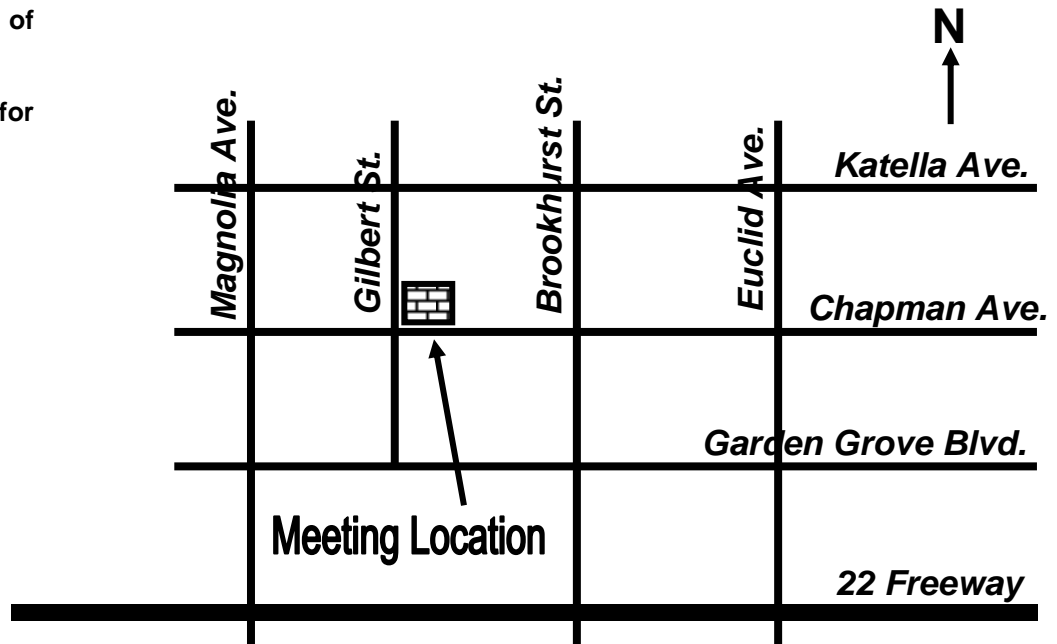
Garden Grove Civic Women's Club
9501 Chapman Ave.
Garden Grove, CA 92841
(NE corner of Gilbert & Chapman)

MEETING ACTIVITIES

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

TO:

March 13 Meeting: Gabriel Mosesson on Ethiopian Welo Opals



The American Opal Society

<http://OpalSociety.org>

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