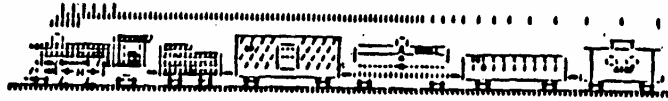




The OPAL EXPRESS

Published monthly by the
American Opal Society...



Sept 1986

COLEEN GUERRETTE, EDITOR

At the August meeting, the Founding Chapter viewed the new video by Paul Downing of Majestic Gems and Carvings of Florida. The title was "Opal Cutting Made Easy." Mr. Downing made the program to supplement his book OPAL CUTTING MADE EASY. He takes you visually through all the steps of orienting for color, then grinding and polishing. The film lasts for an entrancing 35 minutes. Afterward there was a general discussion on opal cutting was held with our club experts contributing additional gems of wisdom about cutting and polishing. The meeting was one of the most informative and broad in scope that we have had on opal cutting. I want to express my appreciation for the increasing participation of our members in each meeting. The sharing of knowledge is the basis of our Society. Thank you all

Since everyone who was at the meeting went right home with all their newfound knowledge and cut an opal, or ten, we will have an opal evaluation meeting this month. Bring an opal, or so, that you wish to determine the value of and using the Official Opal Appraisal chart (included in this issue) and our Official appraisal kits, and our Official experts, maybe we can get an Official estimate of your stone's worth. COME ONE, COME ALL to our OFFICIAL opal evaluation meeting.

THAT'S September 11, at 7:30 pm at the Cal-Fed building in Downey (see map).

AN APOLOGY---It seems that our Editor was not just kidding when she ran that cartoon. To prevent any further symptoms of E.B. (Editor Burnout to you novices) she and husband Andy are on vacation as of press-time so Jewett and Dorothea are getting out the OPAL EXPRESS this month and the late-ness and brevity are strictly our own faults. Hurry back, Coleen!!!!

2

The September issue of the ROCK AND GEM magazine is out and there are several articles on Opal. Two of them are by our member from Florida Paul Downing. The same one we mentioned in the foreword. Paul sent along his latest edition of OPALHOLICS, in a quantity that our members can have a copy for their own. We will have them at the meeting, and for those of you further away, we will be glad to send you one on receipt of a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The Society has purchased several copies of Paul's book, OPAL CUTTING MADE EASY for resale if you wish to order a copy, send check or money order for \$5.95 and we will mail you one postpaid.

////////////////////////////////////

DON'T FORGET!! Our annual show "A FANTASY WORLD OF TREASURES" November 8th and 9th, at the Anaheim Convention Center. For those members coming from farther away than Southern California and not familiar with accommodations in the area, send us a post card or letter and we will glad to send you the information. Plan to make it a week or a weekend for yourself and the family. The world famous Disneyland is just across the street, and another fabulous playground, Knott's Berry Farm is very near by. Come and buy your beautiful OPALS, find the colored gemstones of your heart's desire among the bountiful treasures offered by more dealers, with a greater supply of glittering gemstones than ever before.

Many of you cut your own opal and/or facet your own stones. You can pick just the rough stone you wish and form it into your own bright and colorful gem at many times less the cost of a finished stone. Those of you who do not cut your own will find a bonanza of polished opals, faceted amethyst, topaz, citrines, aquamarines, garnets, in fact just about any gemstone you desire to set in your own handcrafted jewelry or you can buy the mountings already made at the show. If you wish to have your gemstones mounted in an unique new jewelry art form while you visit the show we have two professional wire wrappers to set your stone or theirs in a pendant, ring, bracelet or whatever you desire so that you can wear it right away.

#####

Dealers ! and other members who do not attend the meetings In Downey. We have printed up a new bunch of fliers and if you want us to send some to you, Just drop us a line or call 213-425-2426 and we will send them right along.

3

(continued from proceeding page) This year's handouts have a 500 discount coupon and we hope to attract many more attendees as a result. The more attendees, the greater success our show will be.

IN MEMORIAM

We are saddened by the death of two of our Founding Chapter members. Chris Christophersen passed away last month of heart trouble. Chris was to have made his first appearance as a show dealer at our show in November. His mother will take over his business and be there.

Emil Gales was struck by a car near his home in Highgrove. Services were held in Berwyn, Illinois. Emil has not been able to attend our recent meetings as he has been in ill health since his accident last summer. Those of you who might not recognize him by name, will surely remember those delicious danish pastries he provided for our Christmas potlucks.

BOARD REPORT:

Dolores Proulx has taken over the Treasurers office as Andy is now working in San Francisco and can only be home on weekends. The Opal collection of the Society was reviewed and is being prepared for display at the November show.

Andy reported all tables sold and a waiting list exists for the show. Final payments are now coming in and plans will be finalized as soon as all fees are in.

+++++



KCB & ASSOCIATES

FINE QUALITY PEARLS
AMERICAN NATURAL FRESH WATER PEARLS
NATURAL COLOR PEARLS
BIWA GOLD • ¾ BLISTER PEARLS
COLLECTABLE RARE AND UNUSUAL GEMS
AUSTRALIAN BOULDER OPAL • JEWELRY • CRYSTALS
COLOMBIAN EMERALDS • PALA PINK TOURMALINE
AMERICAN PINK MUSSEL SHELL
NATURAL WHITE STONE BEADS

USPO BOX 1737
SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA
90406-1737 USA

DENISE ROMAN G.G.
Tel (213) 394-8870
Telex 215604 PCB UR ATT R-101

MANUFACTURER
WHOLESALE

SCHULZ & WU INC.
Jewelry and Glass
Specialized in Opal Jewelry – Crystal Cake
Tops I

Werner Schulz Yung Wu Schulz
924 E. Main St., Suite 212 0. (818)282-
2697 I
Alhambra, CA 91801 H. (818)284-9928 I

AMERICAN OPAL SOCIETY
APPRAISAL FORM

CATEGORY	VALUE RATING					APPRAISAL VALUE RATING
	1	2	3	4	5	
BASE COLOR	JELLY/ FOGGY OR WHITE	GRAY	SEMI- BLACK	NEAR CRYSTAL CLEAR	CRYSTAL CLEAR	
FIRE COLOR	RED GREEN	GREEN	BLUE GREEN	MULTI- COLOR	RED MULTI- COLOR	
INTENSITY	VERY LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	VERY HIGH	
APPRAISAL VALUE RATING						

APPEAL FACTOR	MARKET RATING							APPRAISAL APPEAL RATING
	0.5 - 1	2	4	5	10	10	20	
	POOR	MODERATE		HIGH		VERY HIGH		

VALUE RATING	X	APPEAL RATING	=	CARAT PRICE
CARAT RATING	X	WEIGHT (CARAT)	=	TOTAL PRICE

EXPLANATION

We list three categories of characteristics. Each is divided into five factors that affect value. Base color is the background color and white base or jelly (foggy) has a value of 1. A stone with this characteristic and value would be entered as 1 in the right hand column. Stones exhibiting any other color have a numerical value for that factor.

Fire colors refers only to the color flakes or sheets when examined under incandescent light. (Note: Fluorescent light is not recommended for evaluating opal). The lowest value, 1, is used when the two colors, blue and green, are evident. When the full spectrum of colors is visible, it is multicolored. A fire color of 5 is used when all colors are there, But with a predominance of red.

Intensity is the inner glow or brilliance of the play of fire. Incandescent lighting is helpful, but to obtain a better evaluation of "intensity", use reduced lighting.

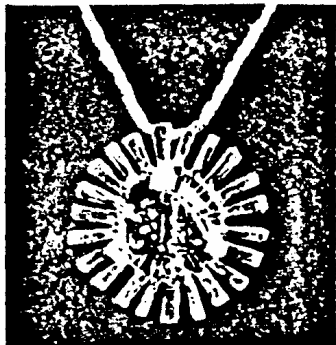
The values of these characteristics are entered at the right and totaled. The total is then multiplied by the "market rating". Market rating should include consideration of shape, symmetry ~workmanship (scratches, symmetry, bezel line, bevel) as well as fire pattern. Real gems will have obvious market appeal. The total obtained by multiplying appeal rating times the total of the value rating should be very near the retail price of opal being evaluated in dollars per carat weight.

This simplified Opal appraisal form is usable for 95% of the Australian Opal that is purchased or sold by the opal public. It does not apply to treated opal, doublets or triplets.

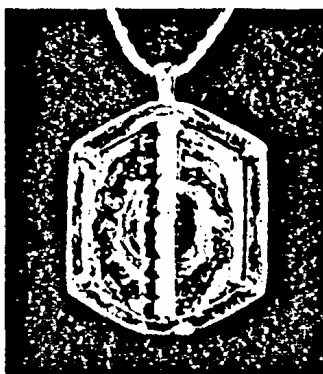
Note: 1/2 values may be used in the value rating scale as well as in the market rating scale.

Form designed by The American Opal Society, 3-25-71 (rev.) for the guidance of Opal Society members. Revised 7-15-82.

SUNBURSTS AND GEODES



**Custom
Yowah Opal
Jewelry
by the
Hendricks**



Marlynn Hendricks, of The Hendricks, Fine-Custom Jewelry, Arleta, California, made her first purchase of Yowah opal at the California Federation show at Santa Monica in August 1985. Although Hendricks does do much of her own cutting and polishing, she came away with finished stones only. No Yowah opal rough was being offered there, nor, to her knowledge, has it been offered anywhere else.

"I decided to feature it because it is so distinctive," Hendricks told Lapidary Journal. Each stone has a registered number and comes with a certificate of authenticity. The material is not calibrated, and in fact all of the stones are free-form cabochons. None of the Yowah opal, she says, is ever made into doublets or triplets.

Because of the rarity of the material and the unusual quality of each stone, matching Yowah opal cabs is next to impossible. Nevertheless, it is precisely upon matched sets of Yowah jewelry that Hendricks has set her sights. The only stones she can use for such Sets are those cut from the same piece of rough, which will show similar color and pattern as well as contour.

One three-piece set Hendricks designed Consists of a ring, a pendant and drop earrings. Violet blue, orange and red fire flash against the opal's brown ground in a strong, geode-like pattern. The shapes of the stones also suggested a geode origin. To enhance this natural appearance, Hendricks created the pendant with cabochons fashioned from the two halves of a single piece. A bar of diamonds fills in the space between them, recreating the original whole. Though she has not yet fixed a retail price, the set carries a dealer price of \$4800.

Mother three-piece set uses opal with a "black" appearance, which Hendricks describes as exhibiting "pinpoints of multicolored fire, predominantly green." The dark ground color is blackish "with an undertone of brown." Because the opal is so colorful, Hendricks simply framed the

cabochons, alluding to the sunny fire with rays of 14k gold. She calls this set "Sunburst." Dealer price: \$3600.

In general, the designer reduces the metal for stones with a lot of color and pattern, tending to set off the stone rather than add extensive visual interest. With material showing less pattern, she allows herself more freedom in the metalwork.

Hendricks finds that the stability of Yowah opal varies, depending on the amount of ironstone with which it occurs. A greater degree of ironstone tends to produce opals that are more porous. These, she allows, are "touchy to set" and she compares them to Boulder opal, where the predominance of ironstone coincides with a more fragile opal. If the piece is mostly solid opal, however, it is quite stable.

All of Hendricks's Yowah opal jewelry is custom designed using a lost-wax pattern. All pieces are set in 14k gold, the only metal Hendricks feels is appropriate to such a rare and startlingly colorful material. Similarly, when she includes accent stones, she uses only one kind: diamonds. Prices are based on the carat weight of the opal, the weight of the 14k gold, and the total points of diamonds. She notes that jewelry-sized I cabochons retail at about \$30-\$40 a carat, but larger stones can be thousands of dollars per carat.

Yowah opal has made but few appearances at trade shows. Hendricks says she has seen it at only two shows in the United States (the show in Santa Monica and this February's I' Tucson extravaganza) and that it has only been offered rarely in Europe, too. However, she concludes, Yowah opal is met with enthusiasm when it is seen.

A couple of weeks ago I received a call from one of our newer members. She had been downplaying the fact that she designs and makes jewelry to sell commercially. I found this information in an old show flier. It seems to state the matter fully.

"The buying of rough Opal intelligently, cutting it to the highest quality gemstones, making fine jewelry and marketing the same properly is the goal of an Opalophile. In presenting this program we hope to pass along knowledge that will assist you in attaining this goal. A.O.S. is non-profit; the individual need not be."

Welcome to new member
Art Risley of Laguna
Beach, our newest
Opalophile.

FOR THE BEST IN CRAFTSMANSHIP
AND DESIGN
OPAL CUTTING, GEMSTONE FACETING
AND CUSTOMIZED JEWELRY FOR YOU
WRITE OR CALL

Creative Rainbows
Custom Gems and Jewelry
P.O.Box 90641
Long Beach, CA 90809
Jewett & Dorothea Pattee
425-2426

**REPRINTED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE
LAPIDARY JOURNAL, JUNE, 1986**



6

OPEX OPAL

ANDAMOOKA OPAL FIELDS, S.A. AUSTRALIA

U.S.A. OFFICE P.O. BOX 50548, SANTA BARBARA, CA. 93150 TELEPHONE 805-565-1441

TREATING OPAL MATRIX

Cut and polish opal matrix as desired. Cerium oxide or tin oxide is best for polishing. Diamond polish can also be used.

Wash stones in a strong detergent. Rinse thoroughly.

Dry stones on wire rack in oven at 200° F. for a minimum of 12 hours. (Twenty-four to thirty-six hours would be better.)

While stones are drying, mix a soaking solution of 4 parts lactose, glucose or sugar with 2 parts water. Heat to a temperature of approximately 190°-200° F. using a glass or enamel lined sauce pan or bucket with cover.

Put solution in oven where the stones are drying, and when the solution is close to temperature required, transfer stones into the solution in the oven. (If you make the transfer outside of the oven, the stones will absorb moisture from the damp atmosphere.) Don't touch the stones with anything oily such as hands. Use a clean dry spatula, tongs or other non-contaminating device. Cover and let cook 12 to 24 hours. Stir occasionally when convenient. For maximum results, put stones and sugar solution in covered container next to a source of heat that will keep the solution at a temperature of 190° F. for several weeks.

Remove stones from soaking solution and place in oven at 200° F. for 2 to 3 hours to dry. Longer is okay.

Remove stones from oven and place in clean, dry soaking container. Cover stones with sulphuric acid (H_2SO_4). Cover container and place on hot plate at medium heat 200° - 250° F. Let cook in well ventilated place for 8 to 12 hours Keep covered but DON'T seal.

Remove from heat and let cool to room temperature

Pour off acid. Rinse stones in baking soda and water solution. Wash stones, pot and tools with detergent and water, Rinse in clear water, soak in solution of soda and water 6 to 8 hours to neutralize acid. After soaking stones in solution, rinse in clear water and soak in clear water for 24 hours

Place stones in solution of 1/3 vinegar and 2/3 water Let soak 6 to 8 hours That's all there is to it!

CAUTION: Wear rubber gloves, safety glasses and plastic raincoat for protection when working with sulphuric acid Work near a source of running water. If you splash acid on you, flush thoroughly and rinse in a solution of baking soda and water Do not mix sulphuric acid with water or pour acid over a container that has water in it as it becomes combustible Boiling point of H_2SO_4 is approximately 626° F

The above procedure is a recommendation only and is carried out at your own risk.

NOTE: Sulphuric acid and lactose can be purchased at chemical supply houses. The sulphuric acid should be 98% normality.

DOWN UNDER OPAL PRESENT OPALS and GEMS of AUSTRALIA SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS

An exclusive "Once in a lifetime" adventure to the world's renowned Opal and Gem Fields with ample time for fossicking, exploration and sightseeing. This holiday also incorporates a multitude of "must see" attractions as well as days of relaxation. **Down Under Opal** — Seattle is proud to present this fourth tour following the outstanding success of our 1983-84-85 trips. This vacation is dedicated to the beauty of Australia and aimed at those who wish to experience what we call "Fair dinkum Aussie hospitality."

- Welcoming dinner In Auckland, New Zealand
- A tour of Melbourne, Victoria
- A fantastic visit to Adelaide, South Australia
- Coober Pedy, the world's opal capital
- Fossicking for opals and sapphires.
- Ayers Rock at sunrise and sunset
- Camel ride, Alice Springs, Casinos
- Hayman Island on the Great Barrier Reef
- Sydney Harbor cruise, Opera House
- Meet with other rock and gem clubs
- Dinner and show at the Bennelong Restaurant
- Farewell dinner

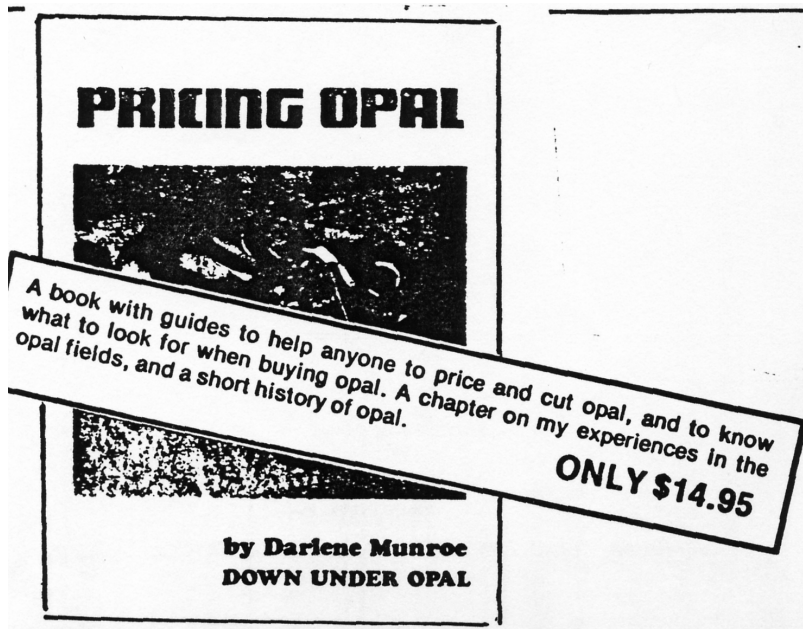
**Departs October 25, 1986
Returns November 26, 1986**

A DREAM TRIP FOR 33 DAYS

BUT IF THAT IS A PROBLEM FOR YOU AND YOU ONLY

HAVE 28 DAYS, WE CAN DO IT FOR YOU !

JUST ASK ME !



Darlene Munroe

**AUTHOR AND
TOUR LEADER**

716 S.W. 179th Court
Seattle, Wa 98166
(206) 241-1666

DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS

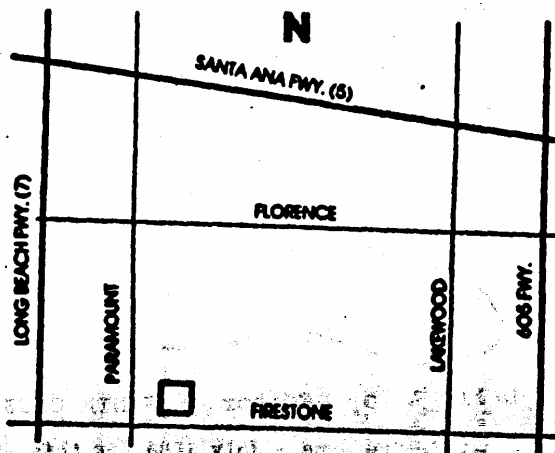
Jewett Pattee, President, 213-425-2426
Dick Koch, 1st VP, 213-927-4372
Bill Judd, 2nd VP, 213-923-4663
Andy Guerrette, Treas., 714-734-7484
Dorothea Pattee, Sec., 213-425-2426
Roy Savage, 213-867-4336

Ross Stambler, 213-693-6898
Blaine Milliron, 213-632-9965
Harold Umberson, 213-693-7380
Joe Vezeau, 714-523-1318
Dolores Proulx, 714-596-6396
Larry Dobrin, 213-305-7674

* **The OPAL EXPRESS**

P.O. Box 3895
Downey, CA 90242

FIRST CLASS



The founding chapter meets here.