

The Opal Express

Published
monthly by
The
American
Opal
Society

April 2022

Volume 55 Issue 4



Table of Contents

President's Message	1
Members Only Website Password	1
Welcome	1
Guest Speaker for April Meeting	1
Koala in a Gumtree - Opal Book Award 2009	2
Imaginology	5
Searchers Society Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show	6
Bench Tips	7
Upcoming Events	8

President's Message

Greetings Opalholics!

Well it looks as though Spring has sprung, even though the weather is more summer-like, it's nice to see flowers in bloom!

We had our first in-person meeting on March 17th and although it was a small group, we all had a great time talking about opals and sharing some of our favorite specimens. One of our new members, Ginger Lai, drove all the way up from San Pedro to attend the meeting – welcome Ginger! We hope to see more members at future meetings – we miss you all!

You won't want to miss our guest speaker for April. Pete Goetz will give an introductory talk on Australian opals.

Stan McCall
AOS President
Custom Creative Gem Cutting

Member area access is available only to members in good standing. Any other entry is unauthorized.

USER NAME: member
PASSWORD: RedflaSH79 (case sensitive).



Let's extend a hearty AOS welcome to our newest member!

Donald Heacox

Thank you Donald for joining the American Opal Society!



Photo from: International Gem Society

Guest Speaker for April

~ Pete Goetz ~

Intro to Opal:

Featuring Opals of Australia

If you'd like to refresh your knowledge of opals or perhaps learn something about opals you didn't know before, come to our meeting on April 21st at the Anaheim Community Center at 7:00 p.m.

Koala in a Gumtree - Opal Book Award 2009

by Mary Aracic

as told to AOS editor, Kathleen James



It was during the Yowah Opal Festival that Stephen and I got our inspiration from the variety of stalls displaying items of interest. Among them, displays of gem colour Yowah Nut Opal. Bolder cut and polished stones, with some of the most wonderful pieces set in stunning jewellery sold in the rough by the bucket.

Also beautifully displayed in jars of semi-rough to attract the dealers, who walked away well-loaded with gems.

Miners were there from Duck Creek and Koroit, as well as other areas of Queensland, most of them were happy with sales judging by the smiles on their faces.

We had our opal books stall amongst them and Stephen's book "Determined". It was so intriguing to know that some dealers buy our books with the intention of giving an appreciative gift to a special client, thus spreading the word of opal far and wide, an aspect that can only help colour the world with wonderful gem opal. It being Australia's national gemstone.

Entertainment during the show was great for young and old, with the ever popular ladies and gents "Windless Race" - a big attraction. The Yowah Designer Jewellery Competition were on public display and the evening events were great with self-service meals provided by very competent caterers from Thargomindah, followed by a choice of yummy desserts.

A lively band played, interspersed by a couple of individual singers - easy to listen to as the crowd lined up for a tasty meal. Chatting to old friends not met since last year's event.

If you felt like dancing, the floor was yours – albeit a concrete square on which to exercise your skills.

And that's not all! For when they say "put another log on the fire", that is done Yowah style. For out of the darkness comes a front-end loader to drop a huge log on the bonfire, sending flames, smoke and sparks into the night sky, much to the excitement of the seated crowd enjoying a meal. Most would agree that Yowah is the most peaceful place to be, a place that is very hard to leave without a feeling of sadness.

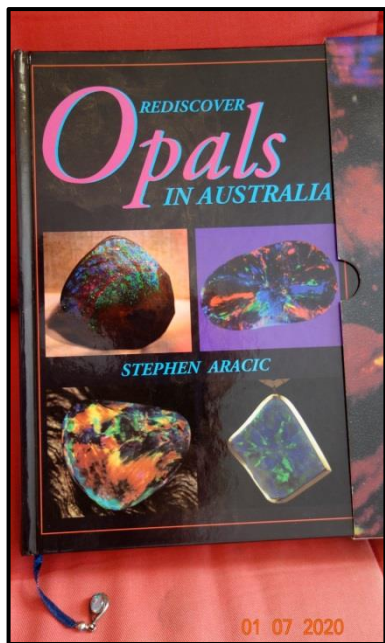
Many of the stall holders wanted to sample the hospitality of Lightning Ridge during Opal Expo 2009, and were looking forward to viewing the jewellery exhibits upstairs in the Bowling Club, which was expected to be world class and beautiful.

In fact, so beautiful that we didn't hold much hope of our piece winning in the Fantasy Awards of a Koala in a Gumtree opal book marker, it being our very first entry - seemed lost in a sea of twinkling rich colours, famous among Lightning Ridge black gem opal displays.

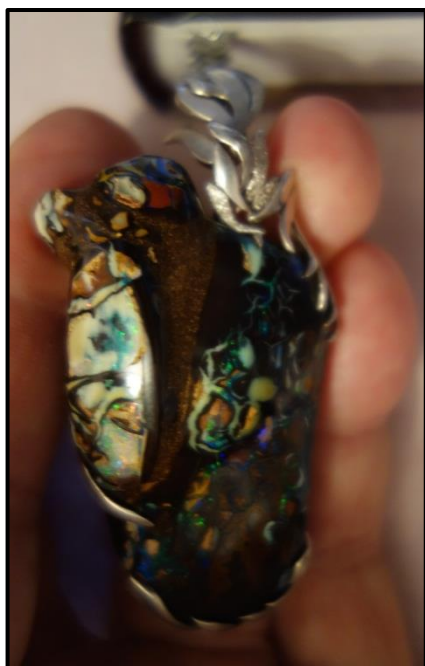
But to the panel of judges, we hoped our entry would look impressive for the sparkle, like a colourful jewel in his own right, as a beautiful specimen of a Yowah Nut Opal, so expertly shaped like a Koala. He seemed to be smiling at his younger mate by a million years or so, in a picture of a more recent cuddly Koala in a Gumtree between the open pages, 141-142 of our Special Edition Opal book "Rediscover Opals in Australia, 1999.

Continued on Page 3

Koala being an Australian treasure. There he was proudly displayed at the end of a silver ribbon, surrounded by silver gum leaves, serving a dual purpose, that of an opal book marker or worn as a stunning pendant on a silver chain.



Opal book with Koala in the Gumtree book marker



Close-up of Koala in the Gumtree book marker

So it was much to our surprise on the Gala Night of superb entertainment that our names were called amongst the winners in the Fantasy Section of "Highly Commended" for our entry of "Koala in a Gumtree - Opal Book Marker". I felt so shaky in my high heels on the catwalk, that Stephen had to hold my hand. Such was my excitement at winning.

There were four winners at our table. Three from Lightning Ridge - Joe Belica, Michael Mitchell and us. The fourth winner being Ian Bell.

I was so busy selling our opal books in the Beer Garden before the Gala Night and had



Koala in a Gumtree Yowah Nut Opal book mark and a cuddly Koala.

not seen our entry piece on display upstairs. So it was a real thrill to see our entry piece on a shelf of its own, at the end of the open pages of our opal book, in a glass cabinet amongst other beautiful winning pieces on shelves below it, which was a real credit to the organizers of the Opal Jewellery Designers Awards. And we thank them for it most sincerely.

Continued on Page 4

Most exciting of all was the reaction from Michael Mitchell to his winning piece, “Nature’s Gift”.

Like us, it was his very first entry. We felt so proud of him, as he hugged his glass-framed award to his heart. For not only had he gone to school with our son, Paul, but he kept pace with Stephen for 8km, with a bunch of school children from The Lightning Ridge Primary School, amongst them was a local, Damien Waterford, Lorne Station. When Stephen walked to Sydney pushing a stroller, demonstrating a safety automatic stroller brake he had invented and fitted to a stroller.

It may not have gone on the market, much to the regret of mothers who had lost babies in run away strollers, but it did put Lightning Ridge on the map. A point brought to Stephen’s attention my Michael Mitchell, a fine young Aboriginal man, as he reached across the table with a hand of pure friendship! For that was back on June 10, 1972, way before those credited on the Gala Night speeches. But Michael seemed to remember it very well. He was lost for words wit his award, but glad to say that thanks to local encouragement of “Best Employment and Centrelink” he did a course with Tafe, under the guidance of his teachers, Michelle Schellnegger and Daniella L’Abbate. There is no doubt that Michael, with such encouragement will go onto bigger achievements with his natural talents.

The young models on the cat walk, all locals, did a splendid job displaying some of the finest winning pieces.

We watched with interest for the first time, a stall near us with a colourful display of Ethiopian opal. It looked so unusual in a brownish background of geode type formation, with deep red hues and flashes of green and blue emanating from it, also light seam type gem opal from a new mine, sold

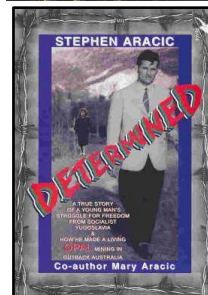
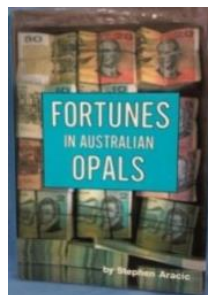
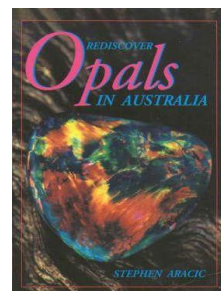
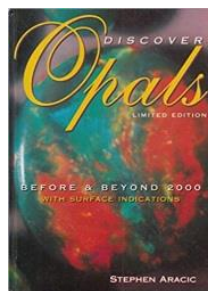
mainly in the rough with some cut stones. It created a great attraction from local miners and traders. Their stall holders were so interested in Australian opal, that they bought two of our opal books – “Rediscover Opals in Australia” and “Determined”.

Tour busses were busy taking visitors around the interesting sights of Lightning Ridge, Grawin, Sheepyards, Glengarry, Coocoran and Mehi. Also other opal fields in the area which are more interesting now than ever. Well done to all for the exciting opal events, both in Yowah, Quilpie and Lightning Ridge.

And not forgetting the entertainment, “Outback Style”.

This story is also in “Metal Stone & Glass”, page 18-21, Summer 2009 Volume.

As AOS Editor, I would like to thank Mary and Stephen Aracic once again for allowing us to share their wonderful stories from Lightning Ridge. I look forward to sharing more opal stories from Stephen and Mary in future newsletters!



You’ll find more opal stories from Stephen and Mary in these books.



Each April, OC Fair & Event Center transforms into Imaginology, a free family event produced by OC Fair staff that focuses on S.T.E.A.M. education and hands-on learning.

Children, teens, families and school groups dig into science, technology, engineering, art and math. Imaginology provides unique experiences for attendees of all ages from preschool to high school, and their parents and grandparents to build, create, play, observe and interact through activities that help them see the possibilities of a future in S.T.E.A.M. fields. Imaginology features make shops, demonstrations, competitions, hands-on activities and entertainment, as well as food and fun. Youth competitions give students the chance to be recognized for their unique talent and accomplishments.

What is S.T.E.A.M.?



Science



Technology



Engineering



Arts



Math

Imaginology was canceled in 2020 and held virtually in 2021. The event debuted in 1989 as Youth Expo and was renamed Imaginology in 2014. This free event is presented as a community give-back by OC Fair & Event Center and supported by local partners.

At Imaginology, kids and their families will not only see a world of wonder, but can participate in a wide range of fun and educational hands-on activities designed to inspire and encourage academic and career exploration.

All exhibitors at Imaginology are required to feature at least one hands-on activity that lands in one of the five S.T.E.A.M. subjects: Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics. This component of Imaginology is vital to the experience because it is what makes learning fun and relevant. Students are invited to build, interact and explore all kinds of activities using skills that directly correlate with a career.

Hours

Saturday, April 9, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Sunday, April 10, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Admission is FREE - Parking is \$10.

Location

Imaginology at the OC Fairgrounds

88 Fair Drive

Costa Mesa, CA 92626

THE SEARCHERS SOCIETY GEM, MINERAL AND JEWELRY SHOW IS BACK!



Searchers Society



61st Annual

Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show

Free

Gratis

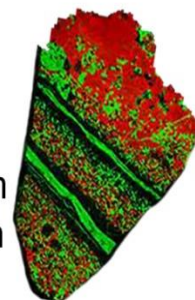


Brookhurst Community Center
2271 W. Crescent Ave, Anaheim, CA

Saturday, April 30th, 2022 / hours 10am - 5pm

Sunday, May 1st, 2022 / hours 10am - 4:30pm

www.searchersrocks.org



Searchers Gem and Mineral Society

Free Admission & Parking! ¡Entrada Libre y Aparcamiento!

**Door Prizes
Gemstones-Minerals
Silent Auctions
Demonstrators
Exhibits
Gold Panning
Dealers
Children's Activities**



Brookhurst Community Center
2271 W. Crescent Ave, Anaheim, CA

**Premios
Piedras Preciosas
Subasta Silenciosa
Demostraciones
Exposiciones
Lavado de Oro
Vendedores
Actividades para Niños**



~ Bench Tips ~

This page will be dedicated to bench tips and techniques from our readers. If you have bench tips you'd like to share, let us know! Bench tips can be anything - metal work, lapidary, wirework - anything creative that you would like to share. Send your tips to: aos.editor.02@gmail.com

COLORING EPOXY

by Brad Smith



To mix larger amounts of epoxy, I use a gram scale to weigh the first component. Then I zero the scale and weigh out the same amount of the second component, add coloring if needed, and mix.

If you are using 5-minute epoxy, the mixing needs to move quickly. But I like to work carefully when adding color. So I squeeze out equal sized droplets side by side on the scrap paper. Then I work with just one of the droplets to add the colors. The 5-minute clock only starts when you mix in the second droplet.

TRY A TOOTHPICK

by Brad Smith

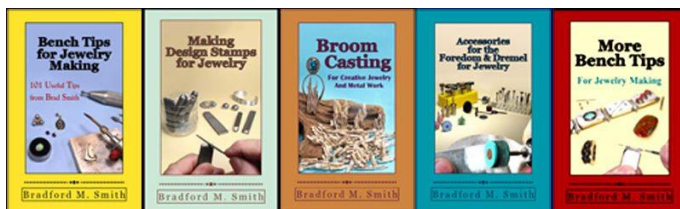
There are two ways to add color when you are using epoxies. The first is to add a powdered material like colored chalk, charcoal, or powdered colors from an art supply store. One that I particularly like is a set of pastel glitter powders. A second way is to add a liquid pigment like nail polish, model airplane paint, or tinting pigments from a marine supplies store.

In preparing epoxy for use, the important things are to use exactly equal parts of the two components and to thoroughly mix them together. Coloring material can be added at any time. If I'm making just a small amount, I squeeze out equal sized droplets onto a piece of scrap paper or aluminum foil and mix thoroughly with a toothpick.

The round, stronger toothpicks have a multitude of uses on the jewelry bench. I use them for mixing epoxy resin, for applying paste solder, and with Zam for polishing in tight spots.

Toothpicks are also handy for holding a small faceted stone while setting it. Just break off the sharp tip, mold a little beeswax over it, and press it onto the table of your stone.

Smart Solutions for Your Jewelry Making Problems
[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Reader: If your organization has an opal or rockhound-related event, please email particulars to info@opalsociety.org. Upcoming Event listings will be included at the discretion of The Opal Express editor as space and scheduling permit.

April 1-3, 2022, Vista CA

Vista Gem and Mineral Society
Vista Gem and Mineral Show
Antique Gas and Steam Engine Museum, 2040 N. Santa Fe Ave.,
Vista, CA 92083
Hours: April 1 & 2, 10 AM – 5 PM, April 3, 10 AM – 4 PM
Come on out for a fun-filled weekend at the Vista Gem and Mineral Show April 1-3, 2022. Held outdoors at the Antique Gas and Steam Engine Museum, you'll find everything from crystals and gems to rough, slabs, and cabs – and even lapidary tools. Not only can you find all the supplies you are looking for, but we are also known for our raffle held on Sunday afternoon. All prizes are donated by our vendors and VGMS. All proceeds go to support our non-profit school and you do not need to be present to win.
Contact: info@vistarocks.org
Website: <https://vistarocks.org>

April 9-10, 2022 – Mariposa, CA

Mariposa Gem and Mineral Club
Mountains of Minerals
Mariposa County Fairgrounds, 5005 Fairgrounds Road, Mariposa, CA 95338
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM
Contact: mgmc@sti.net
Website: <http://mariposagemclub.org>

April 9-10, 2022 – Thousand Oaks, CA – CANCELLED

Conejo Gem and Mineral Club
Borchard Park, 190 N. Reino Rd., Thousand Oaks, CA
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM
Conejo Gem and Mineral Club Gem Show, 46th Pageant of a Thousand Gems
Free Admission and Parking
Contact: gguttman8@gmail.com
Website: <https://cqamc.org>

April 16, 2022 – Lake Elsinore, CA

Lake Elsinore Gem & Mineral Society
Rock and Craft Show
32097 Corydon Rd., Lake Elsinore, CA 92530
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 4 PM
Contact: 1 (909) 208-6956, berylman50@aol.com

April 23-24, 2022 – Santa Cruz, CA

Santa Cruz Mineral and Gem Society
Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium, 307 Church Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 5 PM
Our Spring show has a large variety of vendors selling finished jewelry, gem stones, lapidary supplies and rough stone, fossils, mineral specimens, stone carvings and many other things of interest to "rockhounds". In addition, there is a rock identification table, demonstrations of stone carving, cabochon making and other lapidary arts, display cases containing examples of items collected or made by club members, plus lectures on various rockhound topics. And for kids, there is a florescent mineral dark room.
Contact: scuzgms@gmail.com
Website: <https://www.scrockngem.org>

April 30 – May 1, 2022 – Anaheim, CA

Searchers Gem & Mineral Society
Brookhurst Community Center, 2271 W. Crescent Ave.,
Anaheim, CA 92801
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10AM – 4:30 PM
61st Annual Searchers Mineral, Gem and Jewelry Show
Fun activities for kids! Free. See rocks, gems, minerals, fossils, rough, slabs, gold panning, door prizes, tools, supplies and exhibits.
Contact: (909) 815-3045, searchersgemandmineral@gmail.com
Website: <https://searchersrocks.org>

May 6-7-8, 2022 – Lancaster, CA

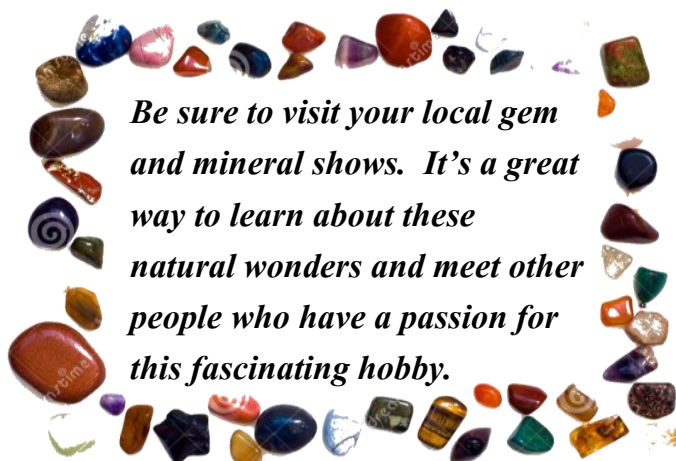
CFMS Gems, Minerals, Fossils & Jewelry Show
Antelope Valley Fairgrounds, 2551 W Avenue H, Lancaster, CA 93536
Hours: Friday, Saturday 9 AM -5 PM, Sunday 9 AM – 4 PM
Gems, Minerals, Fossils, Jewelry, Demonstrations, Exhibits, Dealers, Kid's and Family Activities. Free parking and Free Admission.
Contact:
Bob Backus (661) 526-3564, email: lbackus@aol.com
Susan Chaisson-Walblom (661) 406-0143, email: slchaisson@yahoo.com
More information coming!!

May 6-7, 2022 – Yucaipa, CA

Yucaipa Valley Gem and Mineral Society
Yucaipa Blvd and Adams Street, Yucaipa CA 92399
Hours: Friday 6 PM – 10 PM, Saturday noon – 10 PM
The YVGMS annual show features great vendors, geode cracker, kids' activities, raffle, and club store. The YVGMS show is part of the Yucaipa city Music and Arts Festival with music, various local artists, kids' zone with rides and jumpers, other craft vendors, food vendors, and a beer/wine garden. It is a fun time for the entire family.
Contact: (909) 794-0731
Website: <http://yvgms.org>

May 7-8, 2022 – Jackson, CA

Amador County Gem & Mineral Society
Kennedy Mine Gem & Craft Show, 12594 Kennedy Mine Rd.,
Jackson, CA 95642
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM
Contact: (916) 698-9853
Website: <http://www.amadorgemandmineral.org>



Be sure to visit your local gem and mineral shows. It's a great way to learn about these natural wonders and meet other people who have a passion for this fascinating hobby.

American Opal Society Membership Application

FILL IN APPLICABLE INFORMATION		DUES / FEES	AMOUNT PAID
DUES:	RENEWING MEMBERS	\$35.00	
SELECT ONE	NEW MEMBERS	\$45.00	
INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIP FEE (All addresses <u>outside</u> of USA)		\$15.00	
PRINTED NEWSLETTER FEE (Paper copy postal mailed instead of PDF file by e-mail)		\$10.00	
ADDITIONAL BADGES (Your first badge is <u>free</u> when joining)		\$15.00	
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 via PayPal, please visit the membership page on our website at http://opalsociety.org/aos_application_by_web.htm to complete the form and make your PayPal payment. 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 ()
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 roster once per year in its newsletter, The Opal Express. Your name will be included. Please check what additional personal information you listed for other members. If it is different from the information above, please note that on the application.

☐ Address ☐ Phone-landline ☐ Phone-cell ☐ E-mail ☐ Website

Please sign here: _____

The Opal Express is published monthly by
The American Opal Society, Inc.
Copyright 2019. All rights reserved. Non-Commercial
Reprint Permission Granted Unless Otherwise Reserved.
-Editor
Please address all inquiries and exchange newsletters to:
Editor - Kathleen James
The Opal Express
PO Box 4875
Garden Grove, CA 92842-4875
E-mail: aos.editor.02@gmail.com

Are Your Dues Due Now?

PLEASE CHECK YOUR ADDRESS LABEL OR NEWSLETTER E-MAIL.

There will 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 Renewal Grace Period of two months will be provided. Please note, that as the system is 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.

The Editor

(revised 11/27/19)

The Opal Express

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

Volume 55, Issue 4

— GENERAL MEETINGS —

3rd Thursday of the Month
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Anaheim Community Center
250 E. Center Street
Anaheim, CA 92805

TO:



Meeting
April 21st at 7 p.m.

Anaheim Community Center



General Meeting Location at:

Anaheim Downtown Community Center

250 E. Center Street
Anaheim, CA 92805

Next meeting will be April 21st, at 7:00 p.m. at the
Anaheim Downtown Community Center

American Opal Society

Website: <http://OpalSociety.org>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/opalsociety>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AmericanOpalSociety>
Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/opalsociety>
YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCegTIH1IEyO7y8wdqvRfyUA?view_as=subscriber

Stan McCall	President	(714) 220-9282
Russ Madsen	Treasurer	(562) 884-2254
Kathleen James	Editor	(714) 828-1251
Bart Gampe	Webmaster	(310) 736-5528
Veronica Purpura	Show Chairman	(714) 501-9959
Jamie Cassidy-Curtis	Secretary	

email: aos.president.01@gmail.com
email: aos.treasurer.01@gmail.com
email: aos.editor02@gmail.com
email: aos.webmaster.01@gmail.com
email: aos.showchair@gmail.com
email: jamiec275@gmail.com