

The Opal Express

Published
monthly by
The
American
Opal
Society

May 2022

Volume 55 Issue 5

*Happy
Mother's Day*



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President's Message

Greetings Opalholics!

We had a great meeting on April 21st! Pete Goetz gave a very informative lecture on Australian opal and a couple of members brought some opal from their collections to share.

Now that we're having in-person meetings again, we're hoping that more members will come out and join us – we miss seeing all of you!

Do you know what dichroic glass is? Have you ever seen it used in jewelry? I'll be giving a lecture at the May meeting and will answer these questions and any that you may have about dichroic glass and its uses.

Stan McCall
AOS President
Custom Creative Gem Cutting

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

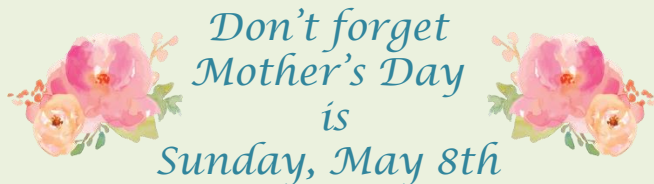
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Let's extend a hearty AOS welcome to our newest members!

Claudia Peterman

Thank you Claudia for joining the American Opal Society!



Did You Know?

The current version of Mother's Day was started by Anna Jarvis Mother's Day in the early 1900s, according to Today. Jarvis got Congress to recognize the holiday, founded the Mother's Day International Association and even trademarked the phrases "Mother's Day" and "second Sunday in May." Jarvis was inspired by her own mother, who had called for "Mothers Work Days" to improve conditions for soldiers on both sides during the Civil War.

Source: <https://www.womansday.com/relationships/family-friends/news/g2265/mothers-day-facts/>

Women in Opal

by Mary Aracic

as told to AOS editor, Kathleen James



As described by Joan Milton of Metal Stone & Glass in 2007, women deserve special mention for their contribution to the industry. There were not too many ladies who have earned recognition as opal dealers, so starting with the Eulo Queen (Isobel Richardson, born in 1850, who first started dealing in opals in 1886) and working up to Sue White, Lilo Stradtler and Janice Evert, who all actively market opal and just to select one more woman, totally involved in the world of opals, and that is Sally Patel of True Blue Opals, now considered a dealer extraordinaire.

Sally is rarely in one place for more than a week at a time. She is forever flying off somewhere to buy rough at one of the opal mining towns, to visit cutters, to do an international show, to sell to collectors and living out of a suitcase for much of the time. And again there are also not too many women today who have courageously, single-handedly dealt with a number of adversities, such as: being treated as an equal as a dealer, some health issues, and some in trusting people to deal as honestly with her as she does with them and then discovering they don't! This is a big learning curve when it means losing faith in those people, yet Sally is a passionate achiever and to overcome all of this, she strives tirelessly to build up her dream of a family dynasty promoting Australian opals around the world.

Her comment "that the industry must encourage the young generation to continue marketing opals, it is a wonderful job that is very demanding at times but so rewarding when you help the miner to market his product" is backed up by her providing her family with the stock and the know-how to follow in her footsteps.

Setting her only son Sameer (Sam) up at Lightning Ridge, and her daughter, Natassa in an office in Tucson, Arizona in the U.S. and Rehana, who trained as a jeweler in America, (in Dallas, Texas) is now paving the way for Sally to eventually show down and enjoy her family of four daughters (two adopted) and one son and two young grandchildren after being on the road for many years.

Sally's background is hardly that of a business woman, this articulate, well-groomed lady was born in Agra, India on 22 June 1953, where she was the eldest of seven children (five sisters and one brother). Her father was instructor in the Indian Royal Air Force and Sally enjoyed a comfortable lifestyle whilst growing up there, attending the University of Agra.

Sally earned her B.A. in literature and upon graduation, taught English literature at a high school (and loved Shakespeare). After marriage in 1974 to Natin Patel, Sally and her husband moved to Fiji where they lived for a number of years and for a time, Sally worked in a duty-free shop in Fiji and saw her first opals there.

However, when the coup disrupted their lifestyle, they moved to Vanuata to continue living in a tropical climate and after happily spending a few years there, they decided to live permanently in Queensland, Australia in 1987. As her husband was involved in international banking, so with time on her hands, Sally decided to visit Lightning Ridge and in 1991, drove over from her home in Springwood, Brisbane to see where opals were mined. For her wearing her national dress, she drew quite a few glances.

Continued on Page 3

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



Searchers Society



61st Annual

Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show

Free

Gratis

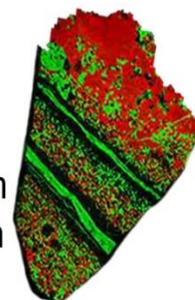


Brookhurst Community Center
2271 W. Crescent Ave, Anaheim, CA

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**



The Art of Opal Cutting

7 October, 2010

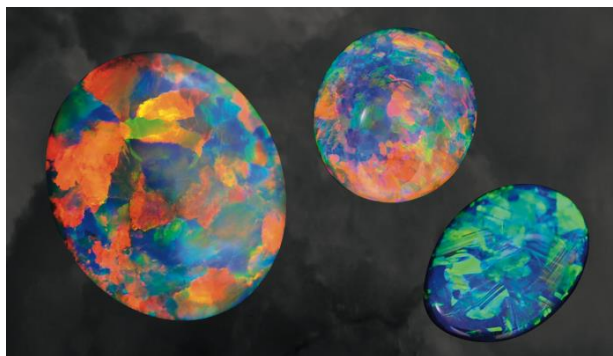


Image from Cody Opal Australia

Australia's national gemstone is also one of the most complicated to cut. GAA opal experts Anthony Smallwood and John Krook explain why it is an art form in its own right.

The cutting and fashioning of gemstones is an art. It is often forgotten that while there is an inherent beauty in the crystal nature of transparent gemstones, this is not always present in the opaque or translucent gemstones. Non-transparent stones – even those of great beauty or value such as opal – are often mistakenly referred to as ornamental or semi-precious gems.

Opal is such a mysterious gemstone that often its beautiful play of colour is hidden. Only an experienced opal cutter can produce an exquisite gemstone. So the opal cutter is an artisan of great importance, who alone can reveal an opal's hidden beauty.

So how does an opal cutter begin? An examination of the rough is key, as the origin and variety of opal will often determine what a cutter does; in this way opal is like no other gemstone.

A cutter working on a Lightning Ridge (NSW) black opal will require a different skill to a cutter who is about to produce a gem from Queensland boulder opal, who again will treat the rough material differently to the cutter of a superb South Australian Andamooka or Coober Pedy crystal opal. Each variety possesses its

own unique challenge for the cutter in terms of the thickness of the opal and the material that forms the back of the gem (ironstone for boulder, black potch for black opal, and so on).

Once the opal cutter has established the thickness of their opal they can assess what shape will produce the best gem from the rough and show the best “face”.

Generally, the cutter's biggest focus is to create a full-faced gemstone of the most vibrant colour and to polish it to a mirror finish. Every opal is unique, so a cutter's experience and intuition are important to success.

When it comes to boulder opal, the cutter must first assess how thin the opal veneer on the ironstone might be.

There's often not much to work with here. Often less than a millimetre in thickness, the cutter won't want to waste any precious opal. So they will intelligently expose the layer of colour and follow it or trace it in an undulating nature to expose the vibrant colours. To allow this, boulder opal gems will often have an irregular surface and be cut in a free shape or free-form with irregular outline.

The opal cutter working with Lightning Ridge black opal, however, will often have the benefit of a thicker colour bar (as compared with boulder opal), so may choose to create a cabochon; cutting a high-domed precious gem if the colour bar agrees, or a lower-domed cabochon if that's all that is available.

It is likely he will produce an oval-cut gemstone as this is generally the most commercially viable shape. But free-form and irregular shapes are also produced for exotic designer jewellery.

Crystal opal and Light opal may be used to create both standardised-sized opal cabochons for jewellery and for more individually shaped free-form and opal carving.

Continued on Page 6

Much of the commercial grade opal jewellery with standardised, calibrated sizes is cut from Light and Crystal opal from the South Australian fields. That's not to say plenty of these stones aren't still available for more exquisite shapes and carvings.

In considering the 'face' of the opal the cutter also takes into consideration the possibility of finding one of many named opal patterns, including 'butterfly wing', 'Chinese writing', 'harlequin' (often miss-used), 'rolling flash' and 'flagstone' among others.

Opal folklore is as vibrant as the stone; unique to Australia and to the outback regions of Australian pioneers from the 19th century.

As world renowned Australian opal expert Len Cram says, "Opal is like gold, once the fever is in your blood you can never get it out". Any opal cutter knows how right he is.

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

Famous Opals: The Aztec Sun God

*History of the Mexican Opal
Queretaro, birthplace of the Opal and
Opal Mining Pioneers*



The Aztec Sun God

According to historic dates, Mexican Opals were used by the Aztec people for the elaboration of ornamental and ceremonial pieces between the years 1200 and 1519. The opal was known by the name vitzitziltecpal or "humming bird stone", referring to the similarity of the iridescent of the gem with the feathers of the bird. One of the opals used by the Aztecs know worldwide with the name of the Aztec Sun God, was supposedly found in XVI decade, and later formed part of the Hope gem collection.

In 1881 it was sold to the Museum of Natural History in Chicago to be part of their Tiffany gem collection. With the Conquest of the Spaniards all the know location for opals were lost, it wasn't until 1840, that Sir José María Siurab rediscovered the deposits and started to work the mines Santa María Iris, in Hacienda Esmeralda. In 1855 other important deposits were discovered in Hacienda Esperanza, the mine La Carbonera, among others.

There were mining pioneers like Leonardo Godinez, Bulmaro Hernández, Joaquín Ontiveros and Eugenio Ontiveros, this last one obtaining the concession of the mine Los Cascarones, a mine that produces a great deal of opals back in that period. The region reached its peak in the year 1969 as a result of the great demand of opals abroad.

From: <http://www.loscabosguide.com/opalosdemexico/history.htm>

How can you tell if a Mexican fire opal is real?

The real fire opals are that of yellow, orange, and red colors and display a distinct play-of-color. They are homogeneous when viewed from different directions, have no ordered column structure or lizard skin effect. The real fire opal comes from two countries Mexico and Ethiopia.

~ 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

EASY WAY TO SAW JUMP RINGS

by Brad Smith

Making enough jump rings for a bracelet or necklace can be a bit of work. The hardest part of the job for me is holding the coil firmly while sawing the rings. Any slip here will break a blade or possibly cut your finger. The best way I've found is to make a little wood block to hold the coil.

To cut the rings, thread the saw blade through the coil, hold the coil down in the groove and against the front stop. Then saw through the bottom of the coil at about a 40 degree angle.

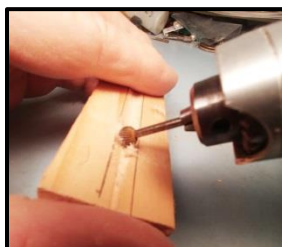


Making the wooden block to hold the rings only takes a few minutes. Find a scrap of wood about 3/4 inch thick and 2-3 inches wide and 4-5 inches long.

Start by cutting a groove to cradle the wire coil. I draw two lines down the middle about a quarter inch apart. The groove can be V-shaped or round. You can cut it on a table saw or ask a friend who does woodwork to make you one.

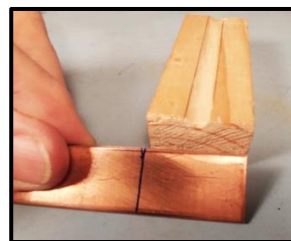


The groove can be carved quickly with a Foredom or Dremel. I've used a ball bur, an inverse cone bur and even a Hart bur to carve grooves.

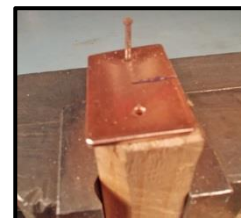


Finished groove.

To complete the block, you'll need a piece of thin (1/8") wood or 14-16ga metal to act as an end stop. Drill a couple holes to attach the piece to one end of the block with nails or wood screws.



The stop will have a saw cut in the middle. It should line up with the center of the groove. You can saw it while making the piece or it can be sawed after the stop has been nailed in place and you're ready to cut your first jump rings.



Attach the stop.

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 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>

June 11-12, 2022 – Escondido, CA

Palomar Gem and Mineral Club
Palomar Gem and Mineral Show
California Center for the Arts, 340 N. Escondido, Escondido 92025
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM
Faceted gems, Slabs, Cabochons, Unique custom jewelry, Rare and common minerals, Fossils, Rough, Beads, Crystals, exhibits, Demonstrations, prizes.
Contact: (425) 281-6218, tonifloyd41615@gmail.com
Website: <http://palomargem.org>

July 16-17, 2022 – Culver City, CA

Culver City Gem & Mineral Society
Fiesta of Gems
Veterans Memorial Auditorium, 4117 Overland Ave., Culver City, 90230
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 6 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 5 PM
36 vendors plus exhibits, demos, workshops and games. Fun for the whole family – Free admission and free parking.
Contact: BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com
Website: <http://CulverCityRocks.org/fiesta.htm>

August 20-21, 2022 – Arcadia, CA

Pasadena Lapidary Society
"Inspiration Unearthed", 62nd Annual Tournament of Gems
Arcadia Masonic Center, 50 W. Duarte Rd., Arcadia
Hours: Saturday 10 AM- 6 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 5 PM
Contact: Ellen Ferrell 1-727-512-0381
Email: ellenbf2007@aol.com
Website: <https://www.pasadenalapidary.org>

September 10-11, 2022, Reno, NV

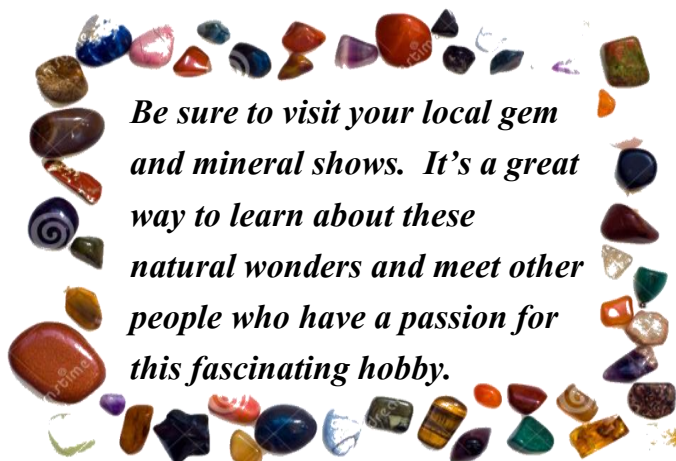
The Reno Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.
Jackpot of Gems
Reno Convention Center, 4390 S. Virginia, Reno, NV 89502
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM
Contact: sailondan55@aol.com
Website: <http://www.renogms.org>

September 24-25, 2022 – San Luis Obispo, CA

San Luis Obispo Gem and Mineral Club
San Luis Obispo Veterans Memorial Building, 801 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo, CA
Hours both days: 10 AM – 5 PM
Contact: 2022show@alogem.org
Website: <http://www.slogem.org/show.htm>

October 8-9, 2022 – Los Altos, CA

Peninsula Gem and Geology Society
Los Altos, CA 94022
Hours: Saturday and Sunday 10 AM – 5 PM
Recreation with Rocks
Contact: 650 575-3144
Website: <http://pggs.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.

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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: _____

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Garden Grove, CA 92842-4875
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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



Meeting
May 19th at 7 p.m.

Anaheim Community Center

TO:



General Meeting Location at:

Anaheim Downtown Community Center

250 E. Center Street
Anaheim, CA 92805

Next meeting will be May 19th, 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

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