

AMERICAN OPAL SOCIETY

P. O. BOX 3895, DOWNEY, CALIFORNIA 90242

Monthly Newsletter

August 4, 1970

Mark your calendar - Meeting dates -

AUGUST.....Thursday, August 13
SEPTEMBER.....Thursday, September 10

SAME TIME: 7:30 PM

SAME PLACE: Pacific Savings & Loan Building,
2nd. Floor - 8211 Firestone Blvd.,
Downey, California.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Board of Directors: Most of the meeting devoted to discussion and resolution of show organization and problems. See the Show Chairman's report.

Membership: Annual dues of \$12.00 should be sent to Della Judd at the AOS address above. Some dues are overdue.

Marketing: Ties in with Show Committee Report.

Show Committee: Things have changed since the last report. The announcement of the show's whereabouts was a little premature - as you will see from Bill Whittle's report. MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER 31 AND NOVEMBER 1. Those are the days when we will want everyone's participation.

AT THE NEXT MEETING (August 13)

Slide lecture on the Australian Opal Mines, By Robert DeFields.

Mr. DeFields has been there and back, and has a tremendously interesting story to tell those who are interested in OPAL.

AT THE LAST MEETING

An excellent speaker, Mr. Walter Johnson, Head of Art instruction for the Anaheim School District, and a Junior Hi Art teacher, explained and demonstrated a lost wax casting process simple enough to be done by junior high students, yet sophisticated enough to obtain excellent fidelity in castings for even the finest jewelry. Mr. Johnson starts with tools generally found around the house, and builds up a complete kit to do the entire job from "Waxing Up" to investment, to burn-out, to casting the molten metal for a maximum outlay of \$10.00 cash.

We'll try to review Mr. Johnson's technique in a later bulletin.

Concerning jewelry design - which some of our members do, and some don't - Mr. Johnson suggested that the mounting for a piece of opal be designed around the type of fire reflection found in the stone. In order for the ring (or mounting) and the stone to fit together as a piece, the dominant area of the metal, the subordinate area of the decoration (or area of added interest) and the accent (to texture) of the finish must all be compatible with the type of fire in the stone.

Mr. Johnson also briefly discussed Tecopa Opals - and described the route to the diggin's. Thirty miles north of Baker on the road to Death Valley, there is a turn-off to Tecopa (3miles). Passing Tecopa, at 4 miles there are some adobe ruins at Sperry Rand(?). Turning off here, there is a parking area and campsite. A short hike up the canyon to dry waterfalls, and the diggin's can yield opal from snake-eye size up to fingernail size, if you work at it. For more information, refer to Desert Gem Trails, or call Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson has invited any AOS members who want to learn his last wax casting method, to attend his adult education class. Announcement in the fall.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The opal polishing calss, being conducted by Bill Judd, will be discontinued until after our annual show.

The display chairman needs information and help as soon as he can get it. On a piece of scratch paper - let Bill Judd know -

1. Do you have a show case to enter in our 1970 show?
2. If you do, what are the dimensions?
3. Do you know where we can get some show cases? (rent, borrow or?)
4. Do you want to share a case with someone else? Your case or theirs?
5. Do you want to make a case?

Send an answer right away to "Display Chairman" at the AOS address above, or phone Bill Judd, (213) 923-4643, no later than the last week in August.

FOR YOUR REFERENCE LIBRARY: Will be resumed in November.

PASS THIS ALONG: In making triplets, one of the problems is to grind the precious opal surfaces parallel to each other. One amateuo uses his faceter, and is thus able to get parallel surfaces on his base, to which is cemented the precious opal. Then the precious opal is ground parallel to the base. It's all done with angles.

SPECIAL
SHOW CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
BY
BILL WHITTLE

I confess that I accepted this job with a great deal of misgivings. But I underestimated the dedication of our membership. What a wonderful surprise to find everyone I approached so willing to accept an assignment and more. I think this says a lot for our organization. We have, not only willing, but capable people who can rush in to fill a gap.

I am happy to report that the organization of our show is developing far better than my early expectations.

We have made a deposit for the Downey Women's Club for the weekend of October 31 and November 1 and not, I repeat, nor Simms Park on October 3 and 4 as we previously reported. The Downey Women's Club is located at: 9813 South Paramount (between the Santa Ana Freeway and Florence Blvd.), and has wonderful facilities. We can be most proud to present our show there.

The Lapidary Journal and Gems and Minerals, among others, have been notified. Our publicity chairmen, Tom Alexander (newspapers), Bill Judd (radio and AAA), and John Boyce and his Redondo Beach Chapter (posters, flyers and cards) are tooling up for an all-out campaign.

Andy Ritchie is once again in charge of our raffle and door prizes. He will be contacting you to see if you will donate some prizes. Also, we are asking each family unit to donate one book of blue chip stamps (green stamps are OK too, Andy says he can trade them). We have some books already, and with everyone chipping in we can get a very nice prize for the raffle (our major source of income).

Bill Judd is in charge of our display area. He is making a list of the members planning to pur cases in the show. If you do not have a case to display your items, he can get the information on how to build one of our beautiful and unique cases. If enough people wish to build a case, we can set up another community project like we did last year. If you wish to loan, borrow or share a case, let Bill know. He is also rounding up some guest displays. If you see or know of someone having a display that would add to our show, give Bill their name and particulars.

For this years show we are incorporating something that will interest most members, I'm sure. We will have our own sales booth where the finished opals and opal jewelry, of all price ranges, will be presented to the public. We will not sell any rough opal, we do not wish to compete with the dealers who will be paying us for space. The Society now has it's own "resale permit" thanks to Tom Alexander.

This booth will be under the chairmanship of our president, Elmer Reed. All items offered for sale must be cataloged and appraised by the marketing committee prior to show time.

We plan to do this during the program periods of the September and October meetings. Perhaps, there will be special meetings for this. A percentage of the proceeds of the sales will be retained by the Society. So get on the grinding wheel and cut some of those "bargains" to sell. Then you can increase and upgrade your collection.

We, also, plan to prepare and sell fancy little grab bags containing prizes, finished and rough opals, most of which we hope will be donated. Some we will have to purchase. Any kind of donation (potch or whatever) will be appreciated.

I will be in charge of the dealers - the board of directors has determined which dealers are to be actually invited. We plan to have 6 or 7 this year, depending on the space available. We have Mrs. Haas (Redondo Beach Chapter) all signed up, and others have been contacted. From the response this far, we should have no difficulty selecting dealers with a variety of materials while keeping conflicts to a minimum.

In the food department, Anita (my better half) is procuring the hot food, and Andy Ritchie is looking into the dessert and drink problem. Ernestine Baxter has agreed to help. The food is a major problem area, and money maker. Any help in this area will be most appreciated.

Andy Ritchie (what a man) is securing the services of the same Long Beach policeman for security duty again this year.

Bob Johnson is looking into the insurance problem. Les Cobit is checking the electrical power available. All committee chairmen should inform him of their requirements.

While I am pleased with the progress of our preparations this far, there are sure to be many unforeseen problems arising, and chairmen will be needing additional help. I would like each member to contact a chairman and volunteer his help. This show is indeed, a group effort and the monies derived determine the extent of our activities for the coming year.

During the show we will need all the help we can get. For example, setting-up, manning the reception desk, kitchen help, selling raffle tickets, running our sales booth, cleaning the glass of the cases, security observation and clean-up.

How well, I remember the efforts of Lilly Nakawatase and Vern Trozzi last year, and the success of past shows. With each of us following their example, we will produce a show worthy of intense pride and induce others to join with us in our program of mutual help and further the advance The Society toward a place of eminence in our area (opal) of gemological societies.

I solicit your suggestions and criticism. All chairmen and anyone with anything to contribute is cordially invited to the board of directors meeting (last Thursday of each month) of course.

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