

The  
  
Lapidary  
Journal



SHELL CAMEO  
By Raymond Addison

APRIL, 1947

*A National Magazine for*  
GEM CUTTERS + COLLECTORS + JEWELRY CRAFTSMEN  
*Hollywood, California*

VOLUME I

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# The Lapidary Journal

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for

THE GEM CUTTER, COLLECTOR AND JEWELRY CRAFTSMAN

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Cover-Carved Shell Cameo of The Four Winds.

By Raymond M. Addison. See Article on Page 8

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April, 1947

# ◆ To William Pitts

## A DEDICATION

By LELANDE QUICK

It is possible for anyone in America to be happier at the birth of the Lapidary Journal than ourselves. I know who it is most likely to be. It will no doubt be William Pitts of San Francisco, known to thousands of lapidaries all over the country as the "Dean of the Lapidaries." I call him Uncle Billy and he calls me variously Buddy or Son.

Not until he anxiously opens the pages of the JOURNAL will he know that this first issue is dedicated to him. It is respectfully dedicated to Uncle Billy because we can say, with no fear of contradiction, that no one man has ever done as much for the amateur lapidary as he has. He richly deserves this small recognition of his great contribution.

There are many, however, who do not know what these contributions have been and those who do will welcome a review of them. I do not know about all of them and obviously I cannot consult him because he would protest if he knew about this dedication. "I want no fuss, Buddy," he'd say, "the only recognition of my kind that I want is just knowing folks are enjoying my stuff out there in the museum. You know I go out there and lean over a case and someone'll say, 'Now isn't that nice? Look at that jade and just see how it looks before it's finished. I'm coming back here again when I have more time. I had no idea there was stuff here like this. And did you ever know there was jade in California? I thought all that stuff came from China.' I tell you, Buddy, when I see people getting happiness out of looking at my polished gems that's all I need. I don't want any fancy hoorah; just leave me out of it."

Mr. Pitts is not an old man. He never will be an old man. He looks as if he might be around 60, and a young looking 60 at that. However, if he lives another twenty years come Thanksgiving he'll celebrate his century. "Never tell folks when my birthday is, Buddy. I

just tell 'em it's in November." Billy came into the world in Georgia right after the "wah." He became a pharmacist in Atlanta and stayed at his job until he got itchy feet and an opportunity came along to travel and "detail" the doctors of America on a food item. He did this for almost forty years during which time he worked for only two companies. "In those days, Buddy, a fellow really travelled," he told me recently. "My territory was everything south of the Mason-Dixon line and west of the Mississippi. It took me two years to get around the territory and then I'd have a couple of months' vacation. No automobiles then, no planes, no fast trains even. It was rugged. I remember when thriving cities like Oklahoma City and Dallas were just cow paths. You should have travelled Texas then. There wasn't anything there but land."

We got back to the subject of rocks and then he really began to reminisce. I must have gone through three cigars while I just sat back and listened to his tales of the old days. George Kunz, greatest authority on gems, and Pitts were constantly in touch with each other. Billy would investigate many reported sources of gem material for Kunz for he got all over the country, as few people did at the beginning of the century. He knew everyone of importance in the gem and mineral world just as he does today. "Only today there are so many, Buddy, and all the old timers are gone. See, here's a postal I received from George English dated just the day before he died. I was probably the last man he ever wrote to. That fellow knew more about minerals than any man I ever knew and he was a saint. Son, he was a saint."

He continued, "I remember as if it were only yesterday how I found that orbicular jasper down at Morgan Hill. Someone had sent me a piece of it they had picked up near there and I figured it must be in place somewhere nearby."

I got a team and drove down to the Llagas Creek and asked a woman in a farmhouse if I could look for rocks on her farm and she told me to go ahead. If you think people regard rockhounds as rocknuts today you should have gone around looking for stuff forty years ago. I got down in the creek and found little pieces of the jasper. As I travelled up the creek I began to find large chunks of it. I came to a big boulder and I was pounding away when I happened to look up and there was a whole con-founded cliff of the stuff. Well I made a deal with a man to haul the stuff out for me for four dollars a load. You got a lot of work in those days for four dollars, Son. I must have hauled out fifty tons of that stuff. Then I figured I had enough."

Every museum of importance in the United States now has a display of cabochons and flats of the Morgan Hill orbicular jasper, called by many "California Poppy Jasper" because of the red and yellow eyes that look like flowers. It is one of the finest jaspers in existence. Not much of it exists today that is not badly fractured but the early material that Pitts dug was good.

Pitts began experimenting with grinding machinery which he had to build himself. There were no commercial outfits then, no diamond saws, no grinding wheels as we know them today, no cerium oxide and felt buffs, etc. Pitts had plenty of stuff to give away and he has spent more than half his life giving away gem material to people all over the world. "That's more than half the fun, Buddy, giving the danged stuff to your friends."

Pitts went into Death Valley in the old mule-team days and I'll never forget the story he told me about the biggest fright he ever had in his life. Another time (maybe) for that. He poked around the original chrysoprase mines near Porterville and bought the best of it for Tiffany and George Kunz, who was their gem expert at the time. "This stuff they sell now for chrysoprase, Buddy, is faked. It's just old chalcodony soaked in nickel. Now look at this stuff." And then he proceeded to wrap up in a paper towel chrysoprase that couldn't be bought from a dealer

for a hundred dollars and stuck it in my pocket. In fact it just couldn't be bought (period).

Uncle Billy used to get a bunch of rock together and send it off to Germany. He'd get it back in the form of necklaces of graduated beads. These were beautifully and perfectly done for the unbelievable price of eight dozen for a dollar (if memory serves) or about a cent a piece. There is one entire case of these necklaces in the Pitts collection in the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. The present day value would be many thousands of dollars. It is probably the most representative collection of American gem materials in existence.

There came a day when Pitts didn't have to work any more. For years he had sent his savings home to his brother in Atlanta. His brother invested his money for him so wisely that Billy is well fixed and he has devoted the last twenty years grinding away at his storehouse of good materials for all the museums in the country. He remained a bachelor. "Couldn't maintain a home-life the way I travelled, Buddy," he told me one day. He still travels. He spends his springs and summers putting in a few hours each day at the California Academy of Sciences polishing flats. He hasn't cut a cabochon for years; just leans to flats and polished specimens now. About the first of October he sets out on a jaunt that takes him to every important museum in the land and winds up in Florida at Christmas time to spend the winter with his "older sister," now nearing the age of 100. Then he ambles back to San Francisco in March to sort over the material he has gathered in his travels and catch up with his voluminous correspondence. He is probably the only Californian on record who regularly winters in Florida. "That's because of the fishin', Buddy," he says, "swell fishin' all winter in Florida."

The Dean has a pet aversion. It is the person who says to him, "I sure envy you. I wish I could just retire and do as I please like you do." "They make me so danged mad," he says. "I always stump them by asking just what *would* they do if they could do as they

please? They seldom have an answer so I tell 'em just what it would be like. They'd get out of bed the first morning they retired at maybe eight o'clock instead of six or seven. They'd eat the same breakfast and read the same newspaper. Then they'd just rest and get danged tired of it long before lunch time. The next morning they'd get up maybe a half hour earlier and do the same thing all over again. In about a week they'd be getting up at the same hour they did for most of their life and their life would be emptier than a deflated balloon. Most people are just not equipped to retire because they don't have anything like gem cutting to tie in to. They never give a thought as to what they'd do when they retire until they suddenly find themselves without an object for living—and then it's too late. Most men say they want to catch up with their fishin' when they've been chasing the dollar so hard they've never done two days' real fishin' in their entire lives. Now me—I just go fishin' and when I get tired fishin' I get back to my rocks. Just do as they please!! Why the poor fools—" etc., etc.

Fifty years ago Mr. Pitts was sending minerals and gem materials all over the land and he was also shipping them "home." He always intended to make San Francisco his home. "I liked California, Son; all of it. You can look for rocks practically 365 days in the year in California and there are 365 good localities. I was the first man in a good many of the spots. There were no 'field trips' in those days and you couldn't buy stuff at every bend in the highway. There weren't a dozen good dealers in the whole United States."

I was with Mr. Pitts in the Petrified Forest in Arizona last October. He knew every log in fifty miles. He has prepared and installed a magnificent display of polished petrified wood there in the museum. This was at the request of the officials in charge of the Forest as no collecting is allowed. He is as fascinated with each piece he picks up as if it were his first find. His enthusiasm is contagious. It is easy to understand how he has succeeded in his lifetime of missionary work of interesting thousands of people in rocks. I am sure he has more knowledge of loca-

tions than anyone living and that he has given away more good gem material than any ten men have ever gathered.

Long ago the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco gave him ample space for his lapidary shop and storage space for his rocks. They will get all his great possessions when he quits. These possessions include a huge window of transparencies. He was among the first, if not the very first, to cut iris agate and sagenite and moss agate into thin sections and show their beauties as transparencies. He also did much of the original development on thin sections for projection slides. His contribution to the lapidary art is great in many directions but principally in the happiness he has brought to many thousands in making them realize that there are "sermons in stones."

Robert C. Miller, Director of the Academy says that "Mr. Pitts has been connected with this Academy for the past ten years. His title is Honorary Curator of Gem Minerals. The collection consists of several thousand items. We have never counted them and besides he is constantly making additions. We do not assign a cash value to the collection because as you know Mr. Pitts is greatly averse to anything commercial. We simply say that the collection is irreplaceable. In a collection so thoroughly good it is hard to pick out what is best. I suppose the collection of opals, jasper, chrysoprase and the transparencies viewed by transmitted light are especially outstanding. To my knowledge Mr. Pitts has specimens on display in the Los Angeles Museum, the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, the Idaho State Museum at Boise, the Chicago Museum of Natural History and the U. S. National Museum in addition to the California Academy of Sciences. There may be others; I am quite sure this list is incomplete."

The Dean has seen thousands upon thousands of mineralogists develop into lapidaries and the recent growth of lapidary societies has amazed and gratified him. Consequently I can well imagine that a magazine devoted to the interests of the lapidary and gem collector will give him great delight. But there would be no magazine today if it were not for his kind encouragement and belief that



it was needed. Therefore it is entirely fitting that this first issue be dedicated to him and I am happy indeed to so dedicate it to that ever young and kindly philosopher, William Pitts—"the Dean of the Lapidaries."

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*The above picture of William Pitts, working at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco, was taken on February 26, 1947. He did not know it was to appear here.*

# ◆ Cameo and Intaglio Carving

By RAYMOND M. ADDISON  
542 Irving Avenue, San Jose 10, California  
*Vice-President of San Jose Lapidary Society*

**M**OST BOYS acquire the habit of collecting; collecting anything from butterflies and bird's eggs to toads and pretty stones. In central Michigan, where I lived as a youngster, there were a number of large gravel pits from which a good grade of cement gravel was obtained. From this gravel, I began collecting pretty stones as a boy. There was everything in that gravel; Petoskey stones, banded agate, carnelian and many other varieties. That was a long time before I ever heard of a lapidary or of cutting and polishing a stone.

These pretty stones were chosen for their color, bands, or spots. I have often wondered how much beautiful material slipped through my fingers when I did not know its value. From this early collecting, the lure of looking for pretty rocks became increasingly fascinating. Some softer stones reached the grinding wheel and odd shapes were worked. None of them were ever polished and I don't know what ever became of them.

While serving as an apprentice engraver and stonemason, in Albion, Michigan, I occasionally made or repaired a mounting for a cameo as part of my training. These cameos were usually made in Italy with Neopolitan scenes, Greek mythological subjects and heads of the Goddesses. The work was interesting for once in a while some would come into the shop carved on sardonyx or other banded material and they were beautifully carved. Working with these well-cut pieces gave me the urge to try my hand at carving. Knowing nothing of the technique, tools of the art, or the patience required to produce a cameo in such hard material, it wasn't long before it became obvious that I should work on softer material.

My first attempt at cameo carving was done on mother-of-pearl, the only material at hand. The result of many hours of tedious work was a head with little or no likeness to the subject but the work had been interesting. I began

looking around for a more suitable material.

Living in an interior state, so far from the coast, one does not see a great variety of sea shells. Not knowing the kind of shell needed it was some little time before I came by good fortune to find a Tuberosa shell someone was using for a door stop. It proved to be the same shell the Italians use in making many of their cameos. This shell is found in quantities in the Mediterranean waters. The new material was much easier to cut and the faster progress encouraged me for now I had begun to get a resemblance to the thing I was trying to reproduce.

The tuberosa color of this material, with a light cream top layer, helped a lot in working out the details and bringing out a likeness. One shell furnishes enough material for several cameos and by the time it was used the cameo carving idea had settled down to an organized procedure.

Passing a curio store in Denver one day I saw a shell in the window. It was a King Helmet (*Cassis Madagascariensis*) of which there are several varieties — Tuberosa, Queen Helmet, King Helmet and others. The King Helmet shell has a black coffee to brown colored inner layer with a light cream to a pure white over-layer. I bought it and secured the name of the importer from whom several more shells were ordered. When these shells arrived I took up the art of cameo carving in earnest. In the meantime a great deal had been learned about the tools needed for carving, the type of subject to choose, and how to proceed from the beginning.

All of this type of work is done from photographs. After the first few attempts I learned that care should be used in selecting a subject as well as the material to be used in carving. A photograph with good lights and shadows, good sharp contrast, a good likeness and a cameo type should be chosen.

My first commission for a portrait

came from a young woman in Denver. It was for a likeness of her mother to be reproduced from a photograph taken when she was eighteen years of age. The photograph was full profile and an excellent cameo style. As this was my first commission I tried my best to make a good likeness. As the work progressed it was shown to the client from time to time. With apparent satisfaction from her the work continued until a flaw appeared in back of the nose which could not be carved out and it was necessary to begin all over again. The second attempt progressed much faster due to the experience gained from the first and a good likeness was produced which pleased the client. Of course it made me very happy to know that, at last, I could make an acceptable portrait.

Several other pieces were made of people around Denver; one of an actress then appearing there. This cameo gave me a measure of publicity which filled my sails with an encouraging breeze that was to take me places—it was hoped.

Having just received a large beautiful shell from the east African shores, I started my largest piece. This work measures 5" x 6½" and is mounted in bronze, meticulously fitted around the wrinkled shell. I was very proud of this piece and decided to enter it in an art exhibit being held in Denver. The day before the opening I received a note from the jury advising the piece would not be shown. I was told it wasn't a true cameo; that one could not be made like that and it could not be classed as art. Therefore it would not be placed in the exhibit. My enthusiasm for cutting cameos dropped to zero. A good friend wrote to one of the local papers lamenting the fact that the public was prevented from seeing such work. It did not console me and cameo carving was in the doldrums. That experience discouraged me and my tools were laid away for several years.

While taking art training at the old Mark Hopkins School of Fine Arts in San Francisco my interest in cameos was again aroused in connection with some sculpture studies. The idea began to grow again in my mind to make fine portraits in cameo; likenesses anyone

could recognize. The search for a suitable subject began and the tools were taken up again. Having lost the feel of the tools in my hand I over-cut by trying to develop some features ahead of others. By this unintentional over-cutting I discovered that shadows could be produced on this type of shell. Close examination of the surface of the shell and a little experimenting revealed that both light and shadow could be enhanced.

Katherine Cornell was then appearing in San Francisco as Juliet. I secured a splendid photograph from her from which I made one of my best cameos. The result of this attempt overshadowed all previous work and quite satisfied me.

When approached with a commission to do a portrait cameo a good photograph should be available. If there is none a sitting can be arranged and several poses taken at different angles. The pictures are studied and a pose selected that is suitable for a cameo. If available several pictures are used in carving. This helps to get a better likeness of the subject. Once satisfied that everything is in order the remaining part of the job is long tedious work.

All of the cameos carved in this technique have been carved on the King Helmet shell from the waters around Madagascar. By examining a shell one can see where the back is connected to the rest of the shell. Take a pencil and draw a line around the portion to be removed. The whole back should be removed so that good material will not be lost. To remove the back, grind a narrow channel around and through on the penciled line and the back will readily separate. Never try to pry any part of the shell as it may crack and good material may be spoiled.

Many methods have been tried to remove the back from shells. My best success has been achieved by using a small grinding wheel about 1/16"x1". These wheels may be purchased in many supply stores or from a dental supply firm. An old dental motor may be used for power. I am now using an air tool in which the wheels are held. The air tool turns faster and does a quicker, smoother job.

After the backs have been removed from several shells one is able to see



*Articles used in cameo cutting. Whole shell at top, back of shell removed, buffer and cameo blank mounted. At bottom are shown an air tool, graver blades and other mentioned articles.*

and select the quality and color of the background of the cameo to be carved. If the subject is blond, a lighter section is selected. If brunet a dark section is used. Blond, brunet and beautiful gray hair have been successfully reproduced on this type of shell. Take a pencil and mark a patch about an eighth of an inch larger all around than the finished work is to be. In the same manner as before cut this patch from the last section.

Most shells have a weatherbeaten

outer surface and some have small worm holes in them. This must be ground down to about  $\frac{3}{64}$ th of an inch thick. It should be done by wet grinding similar to grinding a cabochon and it can be done with the same wheel used to remove the patch. Great care must be taken not to heat the material for it may crack if allowed to get hot.

The patch is then ready to mount on a small wooden block. The top of the block is coated with a good grade of

wax into which the patch is imbedded. A good wax can be made by mixing three parts sealing wax with about one part dry shellac. The wax is heated in a small can into which the block is dipped several times until sufficient is built up to hold the patch. While the wax is hot enough to stick to the shell firmly press the patch into it and carefully mold the edges down with the fingers. The block must be held firmly while the carving is being done. An engraver's block is preferred because the work can be turned and tipped to any angle while making the desired cut.

There are other tools used in carving. One should have several common graver handles to hold the graver blades. There should be, at least, four flat blades; the largest,  $3/32''$  down to  $1/64''$ . One should also have half round blades,  $1/16''$  and finer and two knife edge blades for very fine lines.

For the best results from the cutting edge the points should be ground to an angle of 45 degrees. However, this depends upon the angle the tool is held in the hand. The blade is not considered sharp enough unless it sticks when gently pressed in the finger-nail. If the blade is dull it will slip along the nail. A good pair of dividers with fine points are needed to assist in laying out the eyes, mouth, etc.

If the eye strain is too great one should secure a good glass about 4" in diameter with a 4" focus. The glass

should be mounted in such a way that it does not interfere with the shadows one is trying to reproduce. The glass should not be used more than necessary for one may lose the proper perspective and the work will be distorted. The completed work must look natural to the eye, as others may see it, and not as through a glass.

The photograph is placed in front of the worker about an arm's length away and a sketch is made on the clean white patch of the outline of the subject you are about to carve. The silhouette should be a little larger than the finished piece. Remember that the patch is cut larger than the finished cameo. Careful planning must be done to be sure the sketch is correct and well balanced before any cuts are made. When one is satisfied all proportions are right use the largest flat blade to cut away all the white material outside of the silhouette down to the background, but not into it. There is a marked difference between the two layers of material as one will soon learn as the cutting progresses.

After excess material is cut away remove the remaining pencil marks with an eraser and use a hard pencil to resketch the silhouette. Draw more carefully than before as to detail and correctness of the profile and general outline. Keep in mind that a little material must be left for the very last part of the carving for once material is removed it is gone forever and cannot be replaced. If there



*Subject unknown*  
1 5/16 inches high

*Navajo and Longhorns*  
1 15/16 inches long

*Katherine Cornell*  
2 inches high

*Note details of hair, cloud effects and embroidery.*

should be any doubt about proportions, size, or other features, erase everything and redraw. To get correct proportions it helps if the large photograph is retaken to about the size of the cameo being carved. Use the smaller picture as a comparison piece. When the sketch is final continue the carving, being very careful not to cut into the line. Cut the top layer with a clean cut down to the background. It is now time to begin laying in the major features. The eyes should be placed in the proper position, the lips in the right relationship to the eyes, etc. This should be done with a sharp hard pencil.

As one gains a little experience with the tools he will learn how to bring out the shadows such as are on the photograph. By cutting deeper and deeper into the white material approaching the brown under-layer, a shadow will show. Skillful carving will bring out this shadow to any depth desired. The thicker the white portion left, the whiter it will be and from this thicker portion the highlights are developed. Before long a likeness will appear. When it does, one should continue carving as long as possible for one can accomplish more in a short while at this stage than working intermittently. Do not spoil what you have gained but carefully expand the spark of likeness that has begun to show. No part of the work should be developed ahead of the rest for one is playing with lights and shadows and if the whole is not brought up together some of the shadows may be far too dark for a well balanced piece. At completion of the carving search for spots that may need final touching.

After the carving has been completed the whole surface should be gone over very carefully to give it a soft smooth finish. Opinions vary, but I do not believe a cameo should be polished. The words "finish" and "polish" should not be confused. Polish often seems to give it an artificial appearance and causes undesirable high lights. After trying almost everything I found that a good grade of garnet paper of about 400 grit is the best material to use for finishing. This paper is cut into many small pieces about  $3/32$  of an inch square. These small squares readily adhere to the end of a soft stick about the same size but

several inches in length. Cut the end of the stick to an angle of about 45 degrees or to a natural angle as it is held in the hand. Lightly rub the surface of the work with the paper. You will soon see the result and it is now your choice how far you desire to carry out the finishing process. This lapping operation gives the work a beautiful satin finish, it takes time but for a cameo to look well it should have a beautiful finish.

Since the patch was cut a little larger than the finished cameo it is now necessary to reduce it to the size you desire for the finished piece. Cut a hole in a piece of dark paper as a pattern of the size you desire and lay it over the cameo. You can then see the design in its proper place in relationship to the amount of background and make adjustments. When the size is established use a thin blade to cut a fine line part way through the shell and then remove the shell from the block. To do this, immerse the block in hot water until the wax begins to soften. Carefully remove some of the wax with a knife and the patch will soon lift from the block. The selvage can now be removed. The safest method is to wet grind the selvage on a fine wheel being careful not to heat the shell.

I like to sit and look at my finished piece for a while; to get acquainted with it. It is an odd feeling to realize how well one seems to get to know the person in the new creation. It has always been difficult for me to part with a work when it has been completed. A cameo, like a painting, should be set in a fine mounting.

Some may think it easier to master the art of cameo carving by following the technique used in Europe. Early phases of the work are much the same as outlined with the exception that a cameo carved in high relief does not have the lights and shadows discussed in the foregoing technique. The subject selected should therefore show lines and form that can be sculptured in relief.

Many families possess old cameos. If examined carefully they will help a great deal in developing carving skill. In high relief cameos do not cut the white portion of the shell too thin for relief carving needs thicker material. If there is any color on the outside of the shell used one may use it to advantage in decora-



Top row—(left to right) Anne Morrow Lindbergh— $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches high— $\frac{9}{16}$  inches across—Ruth Summers— $1\frac{1}{8}$  inches high.  
 Middle row—Helen Gahagan as "Elizabeth the Queen"—1 inch high—Two Nudes— $1\frac{1}{8}$  inches high  
 Bottom row—Irene Dunne, from an early portrait— $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches high—Martha Speck—1 inch high  
 Pendant of a Nude— $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches high.

tion. This is skillfully done by the European carvers. By under-cutting slightly the profile may be enhanced.

Many cameos have been carved on pink conch shell. It is easy to cut and the soft pink shades give some very nice effects.

The most difficult and the slowest medium to work is agate. Some of the finest cameos ever produced were carved on banded agate by using two or more bands. Favorite colors are white on black and sardonyx. The darkest color is used for the background.

The technique of carving a cameo in stone is very different than carving in

high relief and this type of carving requires a knowledge of sculpturing. In fact cameo carving is sculpture in miniature. It takes a long time to carve a cameo in stone and one should choose the subject with care. More thought and care is usually required in selecting the material. If it is banded agate the rough stone should be examined to see which way the bands run. Choose the most likely band and saw the material in slabs in the same manner as sawing slabs for cabochons. From several slabs select a portion with good color, depth of band, etc. to assure a well balanced cameo. The blank is cut and ground in the same man-

ner as a calochon except that the blank must be left flat on both sides and ground to exactly the size required for the finished piece. The layout is done in the same manner as with shell cameos.

Tools for agate work are very different than those used in carving shell because the material is very much harder. The most important tool for this work is a small lathe. An old watchmaker's lathe will serve well. A long arbor is made to fit into the spindle of the lathe head with a small chuck at the end to hold several small laps. Laps may be held in several ways; screw them in, hold them in a small chuck, or turn a taper on the end of the stem of the lap to be held by tapping them in or out. Laps are made from a small steel rod about 3/32" in diameter and 2" long. One end is turned to a smaller diameter and a small ball of copper is fused to it. Turn down to the desired size in a small lathe and shape.

Several shapes and sizes should be made to make the many different cuts required. The small laps are impregnated with diamond bort which will do the cutting when rotated at a high rate of speed. Finishing laps should be impregnated with fine bort to grind out deep scratches that might have been made with the coarse laps.

While the cutting is progressing a small amount of oil is applied to the lap to wash away dust and act as a coolant. Experimentation will help decide which oil is best. Some oil works better on some materials than on others. Various cuts with various laps of course require varied speeds.

A good source of power is a foot engine as the speed can be quickly controlled. A variable speed motor may also be used.

By being careful most of the surplus material outside of the layout may be removed on a heavier wheel. This saves a great deal of time. Most carving in stone is done under a glass for stone cameos are usually much smaller than those carved in shell. Since you can never replace material once it has been removed it is necessary to take great care not to over-cut. There should be continuous work on the whole piece and not con-

centration on a section. Agate material cuts slowly and there is plenty of time to carefully check and re-check the work as it progresses.

In a completed stone cameo the background is usually highly polished while the figure in relief is finished with a soft mat finish. This gives the work contrast and accents the color.

Intaglio blanks are prepared in the same manner as cameo blanks except that they are of one solid color. Intaglios can be carved in any colored material but the carving shows much better in darker colors such as black, sard, dark red, or dark green.

I have seen beautiful intaglios carved in banded agate. Their surface was a very thin layer of light material with a dark under-layer. While the outline of the carving stood out exceptionally well the two tones of color seemed to confuse the character of the carving.

In an intaglio the preliminary layout is smaller than the finished article because intaglio carving is a "scooping out" action and the design is made by working from the inside out. All fine lines are made near the completion of the work and with great care as it is very difficult to change or alter in any way any line when it is once cut. As the cutting progresses a small piece of beeswax is pressed into the cut and removed for inspection. The print drawn from the cut becomes a cameo and from it one can judge the depth of the cut and the symmetry of form. Nearing completion of a work prints are drawn more frequently to avoid over-cutting. Haste at this time may result in more labor in reworking the whole piece to obtain balance. An intaglio is usually left with a mat finish while the surface of the stone is highly polished thus making the carving stand out and achieving good contrast. In certain lights an intaglio sometimes looks as if it were carved in relief.

In conclusion I offer the advice that the best tool in the kit is *patience*. Good tools, fine material, exceptional skill, beautiful subjects are all necessary for cameo and intaglio carving but if the carver is impatient and careless he will never produce good work.



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## ◆ *Personal Facets*

By LELANDE QUICK

PROBABLY no hobby has ever grown with the rapidity of gem cutting. At least a hundred new gem and mineral societies have been organized during the last three years and the older societies have all felt new growth. This transfusion of blood has come, to a large extent, from the returned and well-travelled veterans who acquired an interest in gems and minerals in their journeyings and enforced reading during lonely days far from home.

Many veterans brought home gems as souvenirs—opals from Australia, “cat-eyes” from the Pacific islands, jade from the Orient and many gems from the active European and Pacific war theatres. The American is the most acquisitive human on earth. He will collect anything from match covers to apes. This JOURNAL will encourage gem collecting as well as gem cutting by giving sources for purchase and information of their properties and lore.

It isn't necessary to be a mineralogist in order to be a gem cutter but certainly a person acquainted with minerals can get more enjoyment from his gem cutting if he has an understanding of the materials he is fashioning into deathless jewels. Nearly all gem materials are minerals. Gem cutting and mineral study go together like ham and eggs.

The rank beginner at gem cutting will have his own department where he can learn such fundamentals as the reason for a dop stick. The advanced cutter will find useful information in well written and well illustrated articles by authorities. There will be a “Question and Answer” department useful to all lapidaries. There will be a plenitude of society news. There will be useful mineralogical information of help to the lapidary but the JOURNAL is not intended to be a mineralogical magazine competing with the older and splendid mineral publications. The JOURNAL will be readable even to the person who is not a lapidary or gem collector. It will have enough of the light touch to give it a flavor; sufficient seriousness to make it valuable.

The LAPIDARY JOURNAL is launched with the high hope that it will influence thousands of people in the years to come to learn the richly satisfying experience of doing something with their hands, of creating deathless things of beauty. Gem grinding IS an art and lapidaries CAN be artists. And understanding art in ANY form has always developed man into a more intelligent, happy and liveable animal.

\* \* \*

The foregoing was written shortly after the holidays. The things that have happened between then and the time this is written have been a revelation indeed. They have been a revelation of faith. As this first issue is put to bed in March our files contain the names of more than 1,000 subscribers from 42 states and the District of Columbia. The first issue contains advertisements from many individuals and firms. Mr. Ringwald and myself never dreamed that our venture would be welcomed so unhesitatingly; that so many people would offer their money and support before they ever saw a copy. In the years to come we will always regard with new interest every new subscriber and new advertiser but indelibly impressed on our memories will be the names of those who supported us when the LAPIDARY JOURNAL was in embryo.

When this appears the JOURNAL will be born. We hope it will have a long life and exist long beyond the life of the present owners. As the subscriptions and friendly comments continued to roll in we hunched our shoulders as the increased responsibility of making a fine publication became heavier.

This is our best but it is only our best for the present. As we grow in experience we will offer an increasingly better JOURNAL. We believe we are presenting herewith a lively, interesting and useful magazine and that every present subscriber will be happy with it. We believe that it is more than any subscriber expected and that it will leave no one with a sense of being “let down.”

If you like the JOURNAL, support it. Give it to your friends. Patronize its advertisers, for it cannot continue without advertising. Bring it to the attention of your own society members and gem cutting and collecting friends. If you want new subscriptions to start with this issue specify that condition when you subscribe. We have a limited number of surplus copies. Single copies are 35c and we hope to have them available on newsstands soon. Subscriptions are \$1.00 for the first four issues rather than for the first year. It was our intention to change over to a monthly basis after the first year and the indications right now favor that plan.

Many heartening things happened during our gestation. Several persons in-

cluded an extra dollar "for luck" with their subscription, some sent their subscriptions air mail two months ahead of publication date, many put a stamp on their postage paid reply envelopes to save us a few cents, several subscribers sent a check for extra copies and extra subscriptions for friends. We have met with nothing so far but encouragement. We are particularly grateful for the good wishes and support of the other magazines in the mineralogical and earth science field. "Thank you" can be a redundant expression but I have never written the words with more sincere feeling than I do now when I say THANK YOU, OH THANK YOU INDEED!!!

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## ◆ News Items

The Science Park Lapidary and Metalcraft School at Loveland, Colorado, will henceforth be known as The Pioneer Lapidary School. The owner-director, Mr. M. J. Stickles, advises that they are now accepting students for a short summer course running through June, July and August.

The first issue of the LAPIDARY JOURNAL is timed to reach subscribers on April 1st. We hope that no one will think after reading it that an April Fool joke has been played on him. And indeed we hope that it is not an April Fool venture. But if you feel "fooled" let us frankly know about it. We need and welcome constructive ideas. If you have any that impress us we will use them and give you mentioned credit and a year's subscription to the LAPIDARY JOURNAL. And if you really like the JOURNAL let us know about that too. We'll need a little salve for the bruises we'll get from brickbats we are unable to dodge.

Once in a while a cartoon appears in the press lampooning rockhounds. If you have an idea that is humorous and the ability to set it down we'd like to have it. For acceptable drawings we will offer a year's subscription to the JOURNAL. Or if you just have the idea and can't draw, send it along and we'll get someone to draw it for you.

Those interested in gem cutting in the vicinity of Escondido, Calif., may like to attend the meetings of THE DESERT CLUB which meets at 7:30 P.M. on the second Wednesday of the month. They often discuss and display gems. Call John Speer of Escondido for further information.

From Lee Shippey's column in the LOS ANGELES TIMES:  
"Among our unique educational institutions is the Los Angeles School of Jewelry Manufacturing, which is said to be the only school of its kind approved by the Veterans Administration for veterans under the G.I. Bill. At present there are over 50 students but the school

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\* \* \*

The Los Angeles Lapidary Society will not give an annual exhibition of the members' work in 1947. The next great showing of their art is scheduled to be held in the main art gallery of the Los Angeles County Museum of History, Science and Art during the month from March 15th to April 15th, 1948.

\* \* \*

A night school lapidary class is now in its eighth year of operation at the Selma Union High School at Selma, California. It meets on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 7 until 9 and draws an average attendance of 30 to 40 persons from a roll of about 75 persons who come from nearby towns in the San Joaquin Valley. Many of the students are members of the Sequoia Mineral Society. Gates Burrell is the instructor.

\* \* \*

THE CHICAGO ROCKS AND MINERALS SOCIETY held the first meeting of the year at Sanganash Field House reports George C. Anderson, President. The speaker of the evening was Vida Latham, M.D., D.D.S. Her subject was "Diatoms."

Dr. Latham is a prominent member of the Illinois State Microscopical Society which she helped to organize. She was also one of the organizers of the Chicago Academy of Sciences and the author of several medical textbooks.

She came to the meeting armed with four types of microscopes, a large and choice collection of micro-photographs of diatoms, bottles of different colored diatomaceous earth, and some of her most valuable and irreplaceable slides showing various forms of diatoms.

Dr. Latham spoke authoritatively from a vast knowledge gleaned through years of research on her subject. The audience greatly enjoyed the lecture and the question period which followed. Many were amazed to learn of the great number of commercial uses of diatoms.

April, 1947

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A very large slab of semi-precious beryl was recently received in New York from Brazil. It weighed about 56 pounds and if it is carefully cut it will produce about 125,000 carats of fine aquamarine. Brazil is steadily producing fine gem materials and they are being found in huge chunks that have broken all records for gem finds. Few stones can match the beauty of the aquamarine. Most of the huge topaz rings (usually citrine quartz) and aquamarine rings bought during the boom war years have come from similar finds.

\* \* \*

The new Tneson Gem and Mineral Society doubled its membership during its second month. It jumped from 28 to 59. Margaret O. Gastelum, Secretary-Treasurer, advises that the society has held two field trips; one to the Silver Bell area and one to Vail where blue agate was gathered. The members also found some blue agate with satin-like thread handings at the latter location. The group named this material "Gastelum Blue Agate" in honor of the Secretary's Indian husband who acted as leader. Mrs. Gastelum says that all rockhounds ("pups or dogs") are welcome to drop in and see her in Tneson at 1701 S. 6th Ave.

\* \* \*

W. Nelson Whittemore, long time opal dealer of Santa Barbara, thinks men should wear more stickpins. He says they're coming back but we hadn't noticed it. The stickpin disappeared with the starched collar and the vest. I do wish they would be the vogue again as I'd rather have a pin to hold my tie than the chains now in style. However pins will never be the vogue with modern sportswear becoming increasingly popular outside of the "sunshine belt."

Mr. Whittemore matches his wife's earrings to any hat or dress she wears by just removing the stones and placing others with dopping wax. He thinks the same could be done with tie pins. Has any reader tried making pins lately? We'd like to hear about it.

\* \* \*

The February meeting of the Washington Agate and Mineral Society was held at the home of Dan Lawton in Olympia, Wash. Member Kanouse told of his personal field trip to Southern

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## NEW MEXICO AGATES

California and showed specimens he gathered in the Barstow district.

\* \* \*

After completing its first year as a study group of the Los Angeles Lapidary Society the FACETEERS have re-elected Archie B. Meiklejohn, Chairman, James F. Underwood, Secretary and Thomas L. Daniel, Vice-Chairman for the coming year. Monthly meetings are held in the evening on the third Monday of each month in the downstairs assembly room of the Los Angeles County Museum, Exposition Park, Los Angeles. At this time all phases of facet cutting and its problems are discussed. While sponsored by the Los Angeles Lapidary Society the meetings are open to any amateur facet cutter or prospective cutter.

The group would also like to hear about and discuss the various methods of polishing, laps used, angles, etc., with anyone interested. An exchange of ideas would be of mutual benefit to all. Address your inquiries to Thomas L. Daniel, care of The Faceteers, 2238 Midvale Ave., Los Angeles 25, Calif. He will endeavor to answer them.

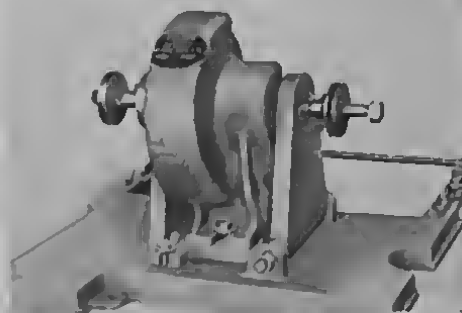
\* \* \*

A regular meeting of the Hollywood Lapidary Society was held at the Plummer Park Recreation Center, Hollywood, California, on February 13th. Delegations from the Los Angeles and Glendale, California, lapidary societies also attended to hear Mrs. Gladys B. Hanaford give her famous lecture on diamonds. This is a lecture that every lapidary society should attempt to book although you may have to book it a year ahead. Mrs. Hanaford's lecture is sponsored by N. W. Ayer and Son, Inc., 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20. The lecture is free and program chairmen of the societies should file their request with Mr. George D. Skinner at the given address.

Mrs. Hanaford gives a preliminary lecture on the properties, value and occurrence of diamonds. This is followed by a slide showing of the mines, methods of mining and lapidary technique. After a question and answer period there is a display of real diamonds and cutting tools with a case of reproductions in glass of many of the world's famous diamonds. This was one of the most interesting lapidary pro-



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grams the editor has ever attended and President Ronald MacCorkell deserves great credit for securing the fine program for this young society, organized less than a year ago by the editor. The Hollywood Lapidary Society is making substantial progress and now has about 45 members, most of them raw beginners. Only seven members have lapidary equipment so far but most of the members are taking lapidary lessons.

The California Federation of Mineralogical Societies will hold a three day convention at Santa Barbara, California, in the Museum of Natural History on May 23, 24 and 25. The latest lapidary equipment of nearly all the manufacturers will be on display and many of the leading dealers will have gem material booths. Of 17 exhibit classifications eligible for prizes, six are for lapidary divisions. The Federation has made a generous gesture which we hope will be continued through the years. They have a classification for "guest exhibitors." Persons exhibiting under this classification need not be a member of any society belonging to the Federation or of any society anywhere. Lapidary or mineral displays may be entered under the classification. Here is a chance for the amateur gem cutter to display and there should be some wonderful entries in this division. Interested persons should communicate with Dr. C. D. Woodhouse, 33 Mimosa Lane, Santa Barbara.

The San Jose Lapidary Society recently cleared more than \$150 at a rummage sale held to defray the expense of their coming show. They have started a movement to build a museum in Santa Clara County and have invited 54 other organizations to cooperate. This is one of the best reasons for existence that has come forward from any lapidary society. May their effort prove fruitful.

The Glendale Lapidary Society, organized about a year ago by the editor, will celebrate its first anniversary at a special dinner meeting on March 31. This society has made wonderful progress during its first year under the leadership of President Dan White.

The Imperial Valley Lapidary Guild and the Imperial Valley Gem and Min.

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eral Society will hold a joint show in the Junior College Auditorium at El Centro, Calif., on March 29 and 30.

\* \* \*

If you are a member of a gem or lapidary organization see that we get news of its activities. We also will publish news of mineral societies that make gem cutting a part of their program. We want clippings from your local papers about gem subjects. Send all items to Box 1228, Hollywood 28, California.

\* \* \*

Dale Dorgeloh of Atascadero, California, forwards us a letter from The National Museum of Australia, in which they say "we are willing to exchange some minerals with you. Would you send us a list of any you have available with the localities from which they came. This is important as minerals without localities are useless in a museum collection." Here is an opportunity for collectors to add to their collections by exchange with a world famed museum. Address your correspondence to Mrs. Sylvia Whineup, Russell Street, Melbourne, C. I., Victoria, Australia.

The Blythe Lapidary Society held a show on February 7, 8 and 9 at Blythe, Calif., and held a field trip for guests to the famous Houser geode beds.

\* \* \*

The San Diego Mineralogical Society had a lapidary program on Friday, March 14th when Robert Clapp gave an exhibition of his thin section agate slides and told of their preparation. Clapp is a member of the Society and is also a long time member of the Los Angeles Lapidary Society. The meeting was held in the Natural History Museum in San Diego, Calif. Interested persons in the area can write to Robert Rowland, Treasurer, at 4010 Alameda Drive, San Diego 3, Calif., for membership information.

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A group in Fallon, Nev., is attempting the organization of a gem and mineral society. Persons in that area who are interested should communicate with George Kell, Route 1, Box 142 G, Fallon, Nev.

\* \* \*

The interest of the public in gem cutting was exemplified on March 19th when the Editor addressed a record attendance of the Ladies Auxiliary of the California Lutheran Hospital in Los Angeles on the subject "Gems of California" and presented a display of his best cabochons and specimens.

\* \* \*

The recent celebration of the hundredth anniversary of Thomas A. Edison's birth brings to mind the fact that it was Edison who sent Earl Hidden to North Carolina in 1879 to look for platinum. Hidden found no platinum but did find beautiful crystals ranging from pale yellow to emerald green. These were later determined to be a rare form of spodumene found nowhere else in the world. The gem was named Hiddenite in his honor. The pink to lilac color of the same mineral found in San Diego County, Calif., is known as Kunzite.

\* \* \*

The N.O.T.S. Rockhounds at the Naval Ordnance Testing Station at Inyokern, Calif., have been assigned a quonset hut by the Navy Recreation Council to house their community lapidary shop. This young organization is making great headway under the leadership of its President Ralph Dietz who is also a member of the Los Angeles Lapidary Society.

\* \* \*

More than 5000 white diggers and 6000 natives were taking part in the new diamond rush 10 miles north of Bloemhof on the Vaal River, South Africa, according to recent reports. About \$10,000 worth of diamonds were discovered during initial prospecting.

\* \* \*

The Editor gave his lecture, "The Rediscovery of a Lost Art," before the March meeting of the West Coast Mineral Society at Fullerton Junior College on March 11th. He was the guest of the President, Marion Speer, at dinner at his home prior to the meeting, which gave him an opportunity of visiting

Speer's famous Western Trails Museum at Huntington Beach, Calif. Speer is a lapidary as is the society's Secretary-Treasurer, Lee Seahridge. A record attendance necessitated securing larger quarters than usual.

\* \* \*

Mr. and Mrs. E. R. Hickey, Sr., have opened a new gem and mineral store in downtown Los Angeles at 2323 S. Hope St. They are busy building up a stock of gem materials particularly and would like to hear from gem cutters who have surplus material for sale.

\* \* \*

Jessie Quane, Vice President and Chairman of the Program Committee of the Los Angeles Lapidary Society provided two interesting lapidary programs at the February and March meetings of that society. The meetings were held at the Griffith Park Playground Auditorium on February 3rd and March 3rd. Member Herbert Monlux gave an exhibition and explanation of his thin section slides of gem materials for projection at the February meeting. This was ably presented and Mr. Monlux showed more than a hundred beautiful slides, principally of various types of moss and sage-nite agate. This method permits study and appreciation of small gem sections that would otherwise be discarded as it enlarges an otherwise worthless thin slice of agate from an inch to a projected image forty square feet or larger depending on the size of the screen. At the March meeting a lecture on "The Brilliance of Cut Stones" was given by George Marcher, one of the first persons to receive the degree of Certified Gemologist from the Geological Institute of America. Mr. Marcher has been well known to gemologists throughout the nation for more than a generation and his program was very instructive and interesting. Both meetings had a record attendance.

\* \* \*

The Oklahoma Mineral and Gem Society, organized in June 1946, welcomes out of state members who will receive the Society's bulletin each month. Dues for out of state members are \$1.00 per year. New officers recently elected are: George E. Smith, Pres.; Claude S. Smotherman, Vice Pres., and Hubert M. Rackets, Sec.-Treas., 1233 S. W. 40th St., Oklahoma City.

April, 1947

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# ◆ *The San Pedro Lapidary Society*

By ANN SCHROEDER, *Secretary*  
2144 Wichita Street, San Pedro, California

AFTER several spurts of interest in rock collecting and gem cutting created by Harry Loomis through occasional mention for a year or so of the lapidary art and hobby the San Pedro Lapidary Society made its first step towards formation by attending the great exhibit of the Los Angeles Lapidary Society at the Museum in Los Angeles on May 5, 1916. They also attended Lelande Quick's lecture that day. The group attending were members of five families living in Banning Homes, a housing project near San Pedro, California.

The first formal meeting was held in the Banning Homes Lounge on July 15, 1916. It was called by Mr. Lelande Quick who brought Mrs. Quick, Mr. and Mrs. Benton McLellan, and Mr. Rolland Willis of the Los Angeles Lapidary Society. They showed specimens of cut and polished rock and brought several boxes of gem material for interested persons. Mr. Quick gave steps and pointers to follow in order to organize the interested group into a club and he appointed an organizing committee. Talks were also given by Mr. McLellan and Mr. Willis. The initial attendance was approximately fifty people but this number dwindled rapidly when the actual organization work got under way and fees and dues had to be levied in order to buy materials for construction of machinery and other equipment. The drop in attendance was also noticed when the construction of machinery had to be planned and accomplished and a suitable room obtained for a shop.

John Scharff was chosen President, Steve Jarrett, Vice President, and Ann Schroeder, Secretary and Treasurer. The actual gathering of materials and planning and construction of machinery were done by Al Cole, Cecil Jenkins, Steve Jarrett, John Graham, Harry Loomis and

Al Pettis. Most of the credit for the construction of the machines belongs to Al Cole, a topnotch machinist. He was able to design, assemble and perfect a saw that will cut stone showing scarcely a perceptible saw mark. Every member of the club realized that in making these machines the plans could not be patterned entirely after any other lapidary work shop that is individually owned but the whole result had to be a consummation of the combined and cooperative efforts of everyone.

After a great deal of effort, a succession of trials and errors, the great day came that the club had been working for when the first stone could be sawed, shaped, ground and polished. Even then there were several kinks in the machines that had to be ironed out so the work could be more easily facilitated.

In order to have stones to work with several field trips were undertaken. The most notable were a three-day trip to the desert at Las Vegas, Nevada. (when more sunburns were picked up than green jasper); a three-day trip to Horse Canyon during the Labor Day weekend when we dug and dug for red and green agate, but didn't always succeed in finding any; a return visit to Horse Canyon on Armistice Day when it was colder and everyone had a better idea what to look for; and several other outings that included Redondo Beach, Mint Canyon, Palos Verdes Hills and Last Chance Canyon. From these excursions to the desert mountains, and seashore the group has gathered a collection of rock that sometimes surprisingly turns out exceedingly well when cut and polished. Other gems are unsatisfactory because they break, crack, refuse to polish or have very little color. By December enough stones had been polished for a display in the Lounge at the Fourth Anniversary Cele-

bration of Banning Homes. The stones on exhibit were both polished and unpolished specimens of agate, jasper, palm root, petrified wood and quartz, together with cut nodules and geodes. These stones elicited quite a few exclamations of wonderment as well as questions concerning, how, when, where, and by whom the stone cutting and polishing had been done.

Some members were concerned with the financial and legal aspects of organization as well as getting machines on which to work. To alleviate the financial problem the initiation fees were raised and a sufficient sum loaned by one member (Dorothy Pettis) to cover all current expenses and to purchase needed articles for construction. A constitution and by-laws committee was selected, headed by Al Pettis, to draw up a necessary constitution. New officers elected on January 10 were: Dorothy Pettis, President; Cecil Jenkins, Vice President; Ann Schroeder, Secretary; and Mildred Cole, Treasurer. The members of the executive board are: Al Pettis, Chairman, John Scharff, Steve

Jarrett, Joe Wood, and Clint Andrews.

The charter membership of the club is derived mostly from Banning Homes with two from Channel Heights, two from Long Beach, and one from Harbor City. While it seems odd to select the name of San Pedro Lapidary Society it was done with a thought for the future and a realization that the society is but a nucleus for an organization that in all probability will grow and expand so that it will encompass not only San Pedro but the surrounding communities in the years to come. The society is deeply indebted to the Residents' Council of Banning Homes for its sponsorship and also its continued interest as evidenced by their request for reports of progress at Council meetings. The Housing Authority was instrumental in allotting the room in the community building for the shop and supplying incidentals such as water and electricity. The whole group is grateful to these agencies that made it possible for the members to achieve the fruition of their efforts which can assure them a continuation of their interest in the lapidary art.

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Author of "Jewelry, Gem Cutting and Metalcraft"

**I**N CUTTING and polishing cabochons it is generally agreed there are four steps:

1. Sawing material into cabochon blanks
2. Grinding
3. Sanding
4. Polishing

The sanding operation may be done in many ways to remove small pits and scratches from the ground stone and leave a smooth surface that is easily polished. Everyone eventually learns that it is useless to try to polish a stone until the surface is smooth.

One method of sanding is the use of a belt sander with silicon carbide coated cloth belts. Some entiers use several of these belt sanders, progressing from one to another according to grit size on the belt, or the length of time a belt has been in use.

The commonest method of sanding is the replaceable silicon carbide coated cloth sheet which is stretched over a wooden disk with a layer of felt beneath it. This sheet is usually held in place with a metal hoop, or tied with a string. The string rests in a groove cut into the rim of the disk.

The writer has tried all of these methods and they all work well. As I am a public school teacher, teaching amateur gem cutting and jewelry making to capacity filled classes in an effort to accommodate as many students as possible in a large high school, I found certain difficulties in sanding where the equipment was used by many students each day. After considerable experimentation I presented the problem to the educational department of a large abrasive manufacturer and finally devised a method of sanding that is cheap and efficient. This method differs from the one using coated abrasive cloth sheets in that the old cloth is retained and new grit applied.

Obtain a face plate that fits your arbor, or make one from a nut and a

piece of sheet metal by riveting the nut to the sheet metal. Mount the face plate upon a wooden disk, about 8" to 10" in diameter, and about 3/4" to 1" in thickness. As the disk rotates true it with a wood-chisel and round the outside face slightly. Secure a piece of sponge rubber and glue this to the disk, after cutting it to size. Take a piece of canvas, wet it thoroughly, and stretch it over the rubber, tacking it on the back side of the wooden disk. Coat the canvas with fine #220 or #320 grit. This is best done by spreading an adhesive on the canvas and dusting the grit from a shaker made from a half-pint screw-top jar, after punching the lid with tiny holes.

Several kinds of adhesive may be used. Water glass, procurable from drug stores, is good. It dries quickly but it does not hold grit as well as some other adhesives. Ordinary liquid hide glue may be used after thinning it with water. Do not use waterproof glue. Hot cabinetmakers' glue is better. It must be soaked overnight in water and prepared in an electric glue pot or a double boiler. This is used in the making of the commercial coated abrasive cloth. Hot glue should be thin and care must be used in brushing it on the canvas to avoid wrinkles. It helps some to warm the canvas over a flame before applying the hot glue. I have taught my students this method for a number of years with good results.

In recent experiments I discovered another adhesive that is excellent. It is a polishing wheel cement used widely in the metal working industry. It is called GRIPMASTER. (Name of manufacturer on request.) This cement may be applied to the cold canvas with a brush and the grit leisurely dusted. It is available in quart cans. The coated sander should dry overnight before being used.

The Gripmaster, hot cabinetmakers' glue or the liquid hide glue may all be

washed from the canvas with hot water and a scrub brush. The canvas should be dried and then recoated. If the sauder is slightly rough, after recoating,

smooth it lightly with a piece of agate. Several saunders should be made. Then one may be used while the others are being recoated.



*View of Jewelry and Gem Cutting class at Woodrow Wilson High School, Washington, D. C. Girl at left is grinding a gem. Boy at the back (white shirt) is working at a flat lap. Boy at right (rear) is drilling a pendant. Students in the foreground are working at soldering benches. Note that about a third of the class is girls. This is a very popular course. Instituted by Mr. Baxter in 1935, it now requires sessions for five groups daily.*

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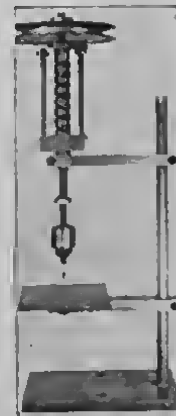
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# ◆ *A Woman Rockhound In Central Oregon*

By E. GRACE PETERS

656 E. Manchester Avenue, Los Angeles 1, California  
Member of Los Angeles Lapidary Society

FOR ANYONE travelling with no camp equipment Bend, Oregon is the ideal place to headquarter while rock hunting in central Oregon. There are all types of auto courts, trailer camps and restaurants and there are many gem fields in every direction for one day trips. Gas stations on the Oregon highways are not as plentiful as in some states and it is best to get gasoline and service the car in Bend and be provided with water and lunch before going on a daily trip.

Our first trip was to Hampton Buttes. We were told that we would not have to dig as there was plenty of material on the surface. We drove east on the Bend-Burns highway (#51) to about two miles west of the town of Hampton; then north over the low buttes of the surrounding area. By careful driving one can go a mile from the highway which will save much walking and hauling.

In this area we found beautifully marked blood-stone but it contained many "bugs". We also found fortification agate, beautiful light green lacey moss agate, jasper, petrified wood with common opal, green jasper and agate. Unusual pieces of material picked up included a piece of rose-pink petrified wood with what appeared to be termite borings and a large tree cast weighing about 50 pounds. Large quartz filled nodules are reported in this area but we found none.

There is a lot of territory to cover at Hampton Buttes and it requires a lot of walking and climbing. My son acted as my pack horse and he did a noble job in carrying our findings to the car. While this area has been well worked through the years by many rockhounds the snows and rains wash out plenty of new material every year.

Our next trip was to Glass Buttes, another location that requires no digging. This location is in the northeastern corner of Lake county and is also reached by Highway #51. Drive through the town of Hampton and continue east for ten miles. A wagon road to the

right leads south to a shepherd's cabin where we parked. Glass Buttes have an elevation of 6390 feet although the two buttes are not quite 1900 feet above the surrounding plateau. These buttes, dating from the late Tertiary period, are extrusions of volcanic glass or obsidian. Large chunks have weathered out of the surrounding material and are plentiful on the low hills. My "pack horse" and I gathered much interesting material here. We found iridescent obsidian in almost every hue: rose, blue, green, purple and soft rainbow-like shades. We gathered three flow chunks of black, brown and clear gray obsidian and we found a rich amber shade which facets beautifully and looks like a lovely dark topaz. Silver sheen obsidian is plentiful and I have seen some gold sheen that rivals the manufactured "goldstone" in brilliance. The iridescent obsidian must be sawed across the rainbow to get the best color effect. It makes beautiful cabochons for use in jewelry that will not receive hard wear.



*Mrs. Peters' party sitting in the midst of thousands of tons of obsidian.*

The high light of any trip in Oregon is a day at Friday Ranch. This famous location is on Highway #97 near Madras. The only marker we observed was the bottom of a barrel nailed to a post at the side of the road which said "Friday Agate Beds 5 Miles." The road leading to the beds is on the east side of the highway, two gates south of the ranch house. It is a common mountain



dirt road as far as the caretaker's trailer camp. Here we found a note on the door reading "we are at the agate beds." Not knowing where they were we had to wait until Mrs. Gulovson, the present manager, came back. This location contains several beds of thunder eggs particularly noted for their colorings and markings. The name "thunder eggs" was given to the rocks by the Indians who believed they were hurled from the volcanoes by the Thunder Gods when they were angry.

Mrs. Gulovson first took us to the "blue bed" where the thunder eggs are filled with blue agate, some with sagenitic inclusions. They abound on the surface and we filled a bushel basket in a few minutes. However I made this trip especially to see the flower beds and I mean flowers. Mrs. Gulovson then led the way to the new flower beds where we dug for two hours in volcanic ash and hard adobe to recover about 60 pounds of thunder eggs many of which contain beautiful flower-like effects. At this writing I have not sawed many of them but I have made nineteen cabochons. Nine of these have flowers so beautifully formed and colored as to belie their origin from the inside of rough brown rocks. Many of these "eggs" are not round like most nodules but are misshapen masses of rock with a hard crust that looks like a baked brick.

The hammer hounds have been busy spoiling many moss filled eggs in quest of flower agate. I gathered many small pieces of broken agate just the right size for cabochons that had fine red moss inclusions. We did not visit the famous "red bed" where many plume agates have been found as I had acquired by the "silver pick" method a good collection of these. When sawed thin many things are revealed—lovely under water scenes with willow trees and red moss hanging over the banks of a lake; sunset scenes in true colors; plume-like hushes, etc. I have one specimen that looks like a forest fire with fire in the distance, blackened trees in the foreground and blue smoke curling into the sky. I have another that resembles a goldfish bowl with gold fish and red moss and another of a tiger lily with leaves at the side. When I

make cabochons from the sliced thunder eggs I study the sawed slabs carefully to get the best possible picture and I try to leave enough of the outer crust or matrix to form a frame for the picture.

There are several other beds on the Priday Ranch but we did not visit them for lack of time. Over-night camping is permitted but it is a dry camp. Water, fuel for fires and warm clothing should be carried for the nights are cold and mountain showers come often. Anyone visiting central Oregon for gem materials will not be disappointed.



*The author picks thunder eggs from a bank on the Priday Ranch.*

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# ◆ *Second Annual Show of the San Jose Lapidary Society*

By **RUSSELL S. GRUBE**, *President*  
1295 Glen Eyrie Avenue, San Jose, California

**T**HE BIG EVENT of our second year will be our second annual gem show to be held on April 19th and 20th, 1947, in the California National Guard Armory at 240 North Second Street, San Jose, California. The members have been working all year for this and are paying the expenses of the undertaking from the proceeds of a rummage sale of material gathered by members for the past several months. There will be no admission and nothing will be for sale at the exhibit.

There will be an abundance of lapidary work on display covering all phases of the lapidary and jewelry art. Mr. Raymond Addison, who has an article on cameo and intaglio carving elsewhere in this issue, will exhibit his justly famous collection of personally carved cameos. Mr. Addison's methods are unique and his cameos are so different and so perfect that many dispute their being cameos at all. This will be a good chance for pardonable skeptics to see for themselves that a cameo can be made to look like a photograph on stone.

The San Jose Lapidary Society was formed when 18 interested people met at my home on January 18th, 1945. I am a charter member of the Los Angeles Lapidary Society and I felt the need of a gem cutting organization in northern California as I could not get to the Los Angeles meetings but about once a year.

At the end of our first year we had 45 members from Santa Clara, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Benito and Contra Costa Counties. Thirty-three of these members had progressed to the point where a public showing of their work was given on January 19th and 20th, 1946. More than 9,000 items were exhibited and the attendance was well in excess of 3,000 which was a record considering the number of persons in the area.

The society now has a membership of more than 70 and we hope to have 100 by the end of this year. Persons in the vicinity of San Jose are welcome to attend the society meetings held at the De Anza Hotel in San Jose on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 P.M. The Secretary is Charles Murphy, Route 1, Box 555, Los Gatos, California.

It is hoped that delegations from the various mineral societies in northern California will attend our gem show and that all persons who have any interest in rocks at all will pay us a visit. Most of the materials displayed will be California and Oregon gems and it is usually a revelation to the public that such things exist almost under their feet. The date again is April 19th and 20th—the place is the California National Guard Armory in San Jose—admission is free and nothing is for sale.

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 Look, he knows me; ain't he queer?"

"Hush, my own, don't talk so wild;  
 That's your father, dearest child."

"HE's my father? No such thing!  
 Daddy died away last Spring."

"Daddy didn't die, you dub;  
 He only joined a mineral club,

"And then he bought a diamond 'sawr'  
 And sawed a ton of rocks or more.

"But now he says he's out of bort  
 And feels he needs a little snort,

"So he's come baek for food and drink.  
 He IS your Daddy, and I think

"He will not bite if you kiss him child.  
 Those lapidaries just LOOK wild."

—L. Q.

# ◆ Modern Jewelry Design

By Leland Quick

RECENTLY, someone came to me after a lecture and complained that most of the jewelry books showed how to make pendants. "Who wears pendants?" said the man as he showed me a magnificent bracelet he had fashioned. He had studied jewelry design in France and claimed to possess a fine library on jewelry design. Of course few amateur jewelry makers ever get the opportunity to study in France and the great majority of them never progress beyond the "pendant" stage but they have their fun and satisfaction and if they are satisfied with that it is more important than their failure to become great artists. I suppose all silversmiths begin with simple designs. As in all things one must crawl before he walks and too many never learn to walk.

But for those who have progressed and have really become "artists" in jewelry design, and for those who realize their own limitations but have an appreciation for the higher talent of others, there is an event now transpiring that is historic and highly important. The Museum of Modern Art in New York has gathered a representative collection of pieces from many top-most artisans and sent it travelling abroad in the land. By the time this appears the exhibit will already have appeared in Durham, N.H., at the University of New Hampshire (Feb. 6th to the 27th) and at New Orleans at the Art Association (March 13th to April 3rd). Its next appearance will be at the Art Museum in San Francisco, April 15th to May 6th,

followed by the concluding exhibit at Baltimore at the Art Museum from May 22nd to June 12th.

Anne Holton of the Museum of Modern Art writes me that "in selecting material for our exhibition, MODERN JEWELRY DESIGN, we found it necessary to limit the field of choice to items under a certain price. This restriction made it impossible for us to include any precious stones or metals." Most of the jewelry in the exhibit is for sale. However as the panels are being circulated no items can be removed until the end of the tour. In many cases similar pieces can be procured directly from the designers or their galleries to whom all requests for purchases will be referred.

Following is a table of the items in the exhibit. Take it with you when you visit the museum if you are lucky enough to be near Baltimore or San Francisco to see the exhibit after this information appears. We list the Panel Number, the Museum Number, the Artist and a description. If any item interests you to the point of inquiry or purchase the Lapidary Journal will be glad to furnish the name and address of the artist if you will inquire by postal. It should be noted that this exhibit, representing the best the craft affords, includes but thirteen pendants and is heavily represented by brass and lucite in addition to the silver pieces. It is significant that there is no item of copper, a metal becoming increasingly popular with amateurs.

Panel No.	Museum No.	Artist	Type of Jewelry
1.	46.1130	Bertoia	Silver brooch
	46.1133	"	Silver brooch
	46.1136	"	Silver brooch with colored thread
	46.1137	"	Silver wire necklace
	46.1138 A-B	"	Pair silver wire earrings
2.	46.1128	Bertoia	Silver brooch
	46.1129	"	Silver brooch
	46.1131	"	Silver brooch
	46.1132	"	Silver brooch
	46.1134	"	Silver brooch
3.	46.1139	"	Silver bracelet
	46.1261	Pousette-Dart	Brass, two spheres with designs
	46.1249	" "	Brass 5-pointed star
	46.1498	" "	Brass scroll
	46.1251	" "	Brass 6-pointed star
	46.1252	" "	Brass 8-pointed star
	46.1257	" "	Brass hollow sphere

Panel No.	Museum No.	Artist	Type of Jewelry
	46.1499	" "	"Tear Drop," brass
	46.1259	" "	Brass amulet, cross, crescent, sphere
4.	46.1255	Pousette-Dart	Brass cross
	46.1256	" "	Brass amulet, cross and sphere
	46.1258	" "	Brass double cross, crescent
	46.1497	" "	"Sea Feeling"
	46.1260	" "	Brass "M" on bar
	46.1254	" "	Brass circle
	46.1473	" "	Brass bird shape
5.	46.809	Calder	Brass necklace with twelve spirals
	46.812	" "	Brass necklace with hooks and spirals
	46.817	" "	Brass bracelet with reversed "S"
6.	46.B10	Calder	Brass necklace with spirals in 2 planes
	46.B14	" "	Brass necklace, flowers and leaves
	46.B30	" "	Bone pendant with silver bangles, leather string
7.	46.B24	Calder	Brass cabochon, with colored glass
	46.813	" "	Brass boomerang necklace
	46.B2B A-B	" "	Pair silver earrings with mobile fingers
	46.1248	" "	Silver bracelet
B.	46.1442	Hammid	Nickel silver wire and glass marble necklace
	46.1443	" "	Matching bracelet
	46.1444	" "	Matching pin
	46.1088	DeRivera	Chrome nickel steel pin
	46.1240	" "	Chrome nickel steel pin
	46.1241	" "	Chrome nickel steel pin
	46.1242	" "	Chrome nickel steel pin
	46.1243	" "	Chrome nickel steel pin
9.	46.1111	deStephens	Necklace, silver, jade, coral
	46.1114	" "	(Temporarily removed) Silver bracelet with jade mask
	46.1115	" "	Obsidian and jade earplug, silver chain
	46.1108	" "	Silver ring with round jade bead
	46.1109	" "	Silver ring with long jade bead
	46.B47	Lipchitz	Gold plated silver pendant set with turquoise
10.	46.1161	Simpson	Lucite and silver necklace with stones
	46.1162	" "	Lucite bracelet with smoke crystal, tourmalines
	46.1163	" "	Lucite bracelet with four crystals
	46.115B	" "	Lucite bracelet with chalcedony chip
	46.1091	" "	Lucite bracelet with green stone
	46.1104	Gay	Silver bracelet
	46.1245	" "	Long silver chain
	46.1246	" "	Flat-wire silver bracelet
11.	46.755	Wagner & Zulumian	Silver necklace with ribbon agates
	46.756	" "	Silver necklace with moonstones
	46.1407 A-B	" "	Square moss-agate cuff links
	46.1105	Husted-Anderson	Hinged silver bracelet
	46.1106	" "	Wire bracelet with stones
	46.1107	" "	Enameled bracelet
12.	46.1145	Hurst & Kingsbury	Silver square collar
	46.1146	" "	Silver necklace with opal
	46.1147	" "	Necklace with irregular shapes, silver
	46.1148	" "	Pin of two irregular shapes, silver
	46.1149	" "	Link bracelet, copper/silver wire
	46.1151	" "	Link bracelet with raised circles
	46.1152 A-B	" "	Pair earrings, silver with labradorite
13.	46.1525	DePatta	Silver ring
	46.1262	" "	Silver ring with rock crystal
	46.1264	" "	Gold pin with smoky topaz
	46.1265	" "	Gold ring with rutilated crystal
	46.947	Turner	Silver bracelet
	46.955	" "	Silver chain
	46.953	" "	Silver chain
	46.95B.1-3	" "	Silver buttons
	46.957	" "	Silver chain
	46.954	" "	Silver checker
14.	46.1116	Burrage	Silver pin, tourmaline, emeralds
	46.1117	" "	Silver pin, aquamarine, tourmalines
	46.1121	" "	Silver necklace, 5 blue chalcedony stones
	46.1123	" "	Silver necklace, yellow agates, yellow quartz
	46.1124	" "	Silver necklace, yellow quartz, rutilated quartz
	46.1492	Karlan	Gold brooch, with tourmaline
	46.1493	" "	Gold brooch, spiral, with black opal
	46.1496 A-B	" "	Silver necklace (A) with pin (B)
15.	46.593	Kraus	Silver bracelet
	46.594 A-B	" "	Pair silver earrings
	46.1237	Lobel	Narrow buckle
	46.123B	" "	Link bracelet
	46.1239	" "	Shoe-horn bracelet
	46.109B	Levy	Ruby and bead brooch
	46.1096	" "	Reverse dome silver bracelet
	46.1102	" "	Nugold necklace
	46.1519	" "	Silver ring
16.	46.1155	Hillsmith	Clay pin with brass wire and clay pendant
	46.1156	" "	Clay pin with brass wire and clay pendant
	46.595A	Goles	Silver/gold pin necklace
	46.595B	" "	Silver/gold pin bracelet

Pancl No.	Museum No.	Artist	Type of Jewelry
	46.596A	"	Blue/green pin necklace
	46.596B	"	Blue/green pin bracelet
17.	46.640	Albers & Reed	Necklace with strainer and clips
	46.642	" "	Necklace with screws and coral beads
	46.645	" "	Necklace with colored jacks
	46.646	" "	Necklace with L braces
18	46.1486	De Diego	Bat pendant
	46.1487	"	Snake pendant
	46.1488	"	Crystal pendant
	46.1489	"	Curved necklace
19.	46.583	Farr	Necklace, coins and brass wire
	46.584	"	Silver flower necklace
	46.585	"	Silver necklace
	46.586	"	Silver necklace
	46.588	"	Pin, fish, dipped in gold
	46.589	"	Pin, fish, silver
	46.590 A-B	"	Pair earrings, silver
20.	46.1141	Bennett	Stiff brass wire necklace with brass pendant
	46.1140	"	Stiff silver wire necklace with silver pendant
	46.1143	"	Circular brass pendant
	46.1144	"	Square brass pendant with leather string
21.	46.832	Bennett	Hammered brass neckplate (curlicue)
	46.833	"	Hammered brass neckplate (scallops)
	46.834	"	Polished brass wishbone pendant
	46.835	"	Hammered brass circular pendant
	46.1142	"	Brass ring
22.	46.836	Modern Navajo	Silver hammered bracelet
	46.838	" "	Silver bracelet
	46.840	" "	Silver pendant
	46.1494.1-2	" "	Pair silver buttons
	46.842.1-4	" "	Four large silver buttons
	46.841	" "	Butterfly pin

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## ◆ Gems From The Mail Bag

This is certainly good news. At last the lapidaries will get a publication of their own. There has been a crying need for just such a thing. *Russell S. Grube, Pres., San Jose Lapidary Society.*

Congratulations on the new enterprise. There isn't a doubt in my mind but that there is an ample field for a well-edited lapidary journal and I know of no one better qualified than you to do the editing. *Randall Henderson, Editor, DESERT MAGAZINE.*

It's a big job, son, but I'm with you in any way possible. *William Pitts, San Francisco.*

I want to be one of the first fifty million subscribers. *Maurine Hazle, San Bernardino, Calif.*

The fact that Mr. Quick is to be Editor is enough for me. Send me more blanks. *M. D. Taylor, Stockton, Calif.*

At last we are to have a long needed publication. Send me two copies of every issue. *Charles Wagner, Los Angeles.*

I shall look forward eagerly to see what fine new thing is in store for us. *Erna Clark, Pres., Orange Belt Mineralogical Society.*

Your project will be eminently successful from the beginning. *Paul Vander Eike, Editor, MINERAL NOTES AND NEWS.*

Congratulations, fellow. If you do it right you are supplying a real need. *Ralph Dietz, Inyokern, Calif.*

Congratulations and we wish you good luck with the new venture. *De Witte Hagar, Felker, Mfg. Co., Torrance, Calif.*

Congratulations and the best of luck. *Thomas Daniel, Los Angeles.*

If I can help in any way let me know. *Charles G. Schweitzer, Temple City, Calif.*

You can not help but succeed, considering such interesting and helpful articles you have written in the past. *Orma Coburn, Los Angeles.*

We wish you great success. *Mrs. Daniel Walters, Ramona, Calif.*

I wish you marked success. *Merle Baden, Riverside, Calif.*

I wish you the highest success in this undertaking. *Archie Palmer, Detroit.*

I wish to be your first subscriber. The time is right NOW to start a venture of this kind. *Dr. H. C. Dake, Editor, THE MINERALOGIST.*

You have been examining crystal spheres and seeing things. Here's hoping you much success. *George McPheeters, Burbank, Calif.*

I know it will be worthy of the rocks it will tell about. *Helen Babcock, Whittier, Calif.*

Best wishes and may you prosper. *Ralph Waldo, Centralia, Wash.*

Success to your endeavor. *E. C. Cline, San Bernardino, Calif.*

Our VERY best wishes. *Victor and Wilhella Gunderson, Los Angeles.*

Best wishes for a successful career for the LAPIDARY JOURNAL. *Samuel Steinlauf, Bridgeport, Conn.*

Every wish for its well deserved success. *Madeleine Burrage, Wiscasset, Me.*

There is a great need for such a JOURNAL. *Mrs. John B. Clarke, Sanland, Calif.*

I am sure you will make a great success of it. *Mary Humble, Los Angeles.*

My best wishes for your new venture and may the LAPIDARY JOURNAL grow and prosper with each issue. *Peter Zodac, Editor, ROCKS AND MINERALS.*

You've done it again. Congratulations. *Loran Perry, Pasadena.*

I expect and hope to see the JOURNAL issued monthly in 1948. *Walter Gorham, Ajo, Arizona.*

A million dollars of Good Luck wishes. *C. G. May, San Fernando, Calif.*



Best Wishes in your new undertaking. *Robert B. Berry, Editor, THE EARTH SCIENCE DIGEST.*

We are certain the type of publication you will edit will have outstanding merit. *R. J. Feist, Phoenix, Ariz.*

Just what we needed to further the appreciation and knowledge of the crafts of jewelry and lapidary. *de Marrione and Charles, Los Angeles.*

The Tucson Gem and Mineral Society offers congratulations on the birth of your publication. It sounds wonderful.

Best of luck to your new venture. *Jay E. Gilkey, Oklahoma City.*

I am pleased to see that you are planning a new lapidary magazine. I hope it will be widely read. *Dr. Frederick H. Pough, Curator of Mineralogy at the American Museum of Natural History, New York City.*

We are looking forward with anticipation to viewing the first issue. *James J. Kehoc, Bigfork, Montana.*

Best wishes for success. *Charles Hopkins, Burlington, N. C.*

I believe your new type of magazine is one that is greatly needed and that it will be well received. *Kathleen D. Kitchell, Terlingua, Texas.*

Herewith my buck; more where this came from. Luck fella! *Dr. Lloyd D. Reeks, Indio, Calif.*

Give information on faceting; anybody can cut cabochons. *Claudius Dalloz, New York City.*

I am sure that your new publication will fill many needs of the amateur lapidary. *John Grieger, Pasadena, Calif.*

Best wishes for success in your new venture. *William J. Kane, San Francisco.*

May we congratulate you on the new magazine and wish you all kinds of success. *Lowell R. Cordon, Long Beach, Calif.*

I have been waiting for just such a publication. Yours is going to be "just the ticket". *Clinton E. Wager, Jerome, Ariz.*

May you enjoy a long and prosperous life. *E. R. Hickey, Sr., Los Angeles.*

I wish you a steady growth and a great book because as long as we have good copies for people to read the more they will become interested. May you have a long and good JOURNAL. *Clarence A. Ames, Portland.*

I am looking forward to receiving it as it is something all lapidaries need. *H. H. MacKechnie, Hollywood.*

Success to our new born magazine. *B. B. Balyeat, Altadena, Calif.*

Good luck in your new venture. *Mrs. Arthur Bissell, Inyokern, Calif.*

I thank you in advance. *Adolph Jarvimaki, Frazee, Minn.*

There is a great opportunity for such a publication and I want to extend heartiest wishes for your success. *Dr. Frederick W. Burcky, San Marino, Calif.*

I guess one more won't hurt much, so here is my dollar. *Roy Morgan, Modesto, Calif.*

May you have success in this new undertaking. *Mrs. A. E. Thiel, Montpelier, Idaho.*

I know it will be a success. *William T. Baxter, Bethesda, Md.*

We hope it is just what we have been wishing for. *Mac Clanahan & Son, Sacramento, Calif.*

This is a step in the right direction. More power to you. *Dr. H. H. Snook, Palmdale, Calif.*

I am sure it will be a great success as it is greatly needed. *Ray C. Bowers, Burbank, Calif.*

This is a magazine the lapidary has needed for sometime. *W. E. True, Portland.*

We feel that you have every reason to feel optimistic about the reception of a publication devoted to gems and the lapidary field. *Ralph T. Salsbury, San Diego.*

I'll say your magazine will be in demand. *Len A. Bennett, Kernville, Calif.*

I'm sure it will be gladly received. *Kate Ness, Bakersfield, Calif.*

Will be expecting my first copy of your JOURNAL with great impatience. I KNOW it will be fine. *Katharine M. Gohn, Mrs. Ariz.*

The West Coast Mineral Society wishes you Good Luck and Good Going.

Figure I'd better hear what the old packrats have to say before I leave my bones to bleach. Good luck feller. *Mahlon Frank, San Marino, Calif.*

May it have a long and prosperous life! *Angelou Hoffmister, Los Angeles.*

Thank you for your helpfulness to us. *Dwight Brooke, Big Pine, Calif.*

May His blessings be yours. *Pastor John L. Zecher, San Juan Bautista, Calif.*

Congratulations. We ought to have had one long ago. *Thomas D. Gatshall, Sandwich, N. H.*

Hope your new publication goes over with a BANG!! *El Paso Rock & Lapidary Supply.*

Looking forward to your first issue and much luck to you in the new venture. *Maryann Kasey, Prescott, Ariz.*

Best of luck with your new publication. *Harris J. Ide, Burlington, Wis.*

Our very best wishes for your success. *Smith's Agate Shop, Portland.*

Best wishes for the success of your magazine. *J. Harry Howard, Greenville, S. C., Author of "Handbook for The Amateur Lapidary".*

I think your magazine will be just what the lapidary needs. *C. H. Lindley, Tempe, Ariz.*

"Wishing you every success". *Wildberg Bros. Swirling & Refining Co., Los Angeles.*

"I wish you all the success". *Fred W. Schroeder, Riverside.*

"My husband and I are lapidaries and we are looking forward to your publication as one long needed". *Mrs. Dorothy Frestal, Terrebonne, Oregon.*

"It sounds just like it's the paper many of us want and here's good luck and best wishes. *B. S. Kettering, Pueblo, Colorado.*

"While I do not have any lapidary equipment I expect to have some some time in the future, therefore think this magazine will be of some help. Wishing it success. *John N. Bently, Kingfisher, Oklahoma.*

"This is a magazine that is needed and we wish you luck on your venture. We read your column in the Desert Magazine, a magazine we enjoy". *G. D. Kinzer, Washington, D. C.*

Here's hoping for your success. *H. Loren Mitchell, Montrose, Calif.*

Here's my buck, lots of luck. *Wm. F. Thompson, Eugene, Oregon.*

I think you are to be congratulated for your part in founding this new publication, and I am confident that it will be a successful venture. *Eldon D. Beezley, Los Angeles.*

I think you have started something that will go over in a big way and prove a great help to everyone interested. *Floyd T. Cooy, Pacific Coast Exploration Co., Riverside.*

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Lots of good luck as I have enjoyed your Amateur Gem Cutter articles in the *Desert Magazine* since their inception. *Walter N. Lamore, San Francisco.*

Best wishes for success in your venture. *Wm. C. Chandler, San Jose, Calif.*

Wishing you every success. *Ernest S. Bateman, Seattle, Wash.*

Best wishes. *The Colorado Gem Co., Bayfield, Colorado.*

Again wishing you best of luck. *Star-dust Gemhouse, Phoenix, Arizona.*

Wishing you good luck with this publication. *Gripmaster Division, Nelson Chemicals Corp., Detroit, Mich.*

We should like to extend our very best wishes in connection with the success of the *Lapidary Journal*. *Lee Lapidaries, Cleveland, Ohio.*

Wishing you many years of successful business. *Mrs. J. B. Clark & Mrs. Wm. Kuhn, Sausalito, Calif.*

Good luck with your venture. *Calvin D. Wood, San Francisco, Calif.*

I am glad for the privilege of having an ad in the first issue of the new *Lapidary Journal*. We are very enthusiastic about this new publication, feel it will fill a place that no other publication has filled. *Cora L. Young, Martinez, Calif.*

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## ◆ *Sawing Montana Agate*

By JAMES J. KEHOE  
Big Fork, Montana

PEOPLE not familiar with sawing and cutting Montana agate have perhaps wondered how to "set up" to saw the first nodules they acquire. Some nodules are still a puzzle to me even after many years of cutting this greatly varying material, but I will endeavor to offer a few hints that may help others.

Most Montana nodules are found in two shapes—flat and slightly curving like the hand, or round and elongated. As over a dozen types or varieties of moss, scenes, iris, or bands of colors are found in both shapes, the way the rock is set up to saw will usually determine whether the slabs will show a scenic effect, fine banding with figures in the banding, a combined scene and band of color for clouds or sunset, dendrites that look like snowflakes or sunflowers, or moss spots taking the form of any one of a variety of figures. If the rock is good and does have these possibilities it can easily be ruined or several slabs spoiled by one saw cut at the wrong angle.

The first thing to do is to look into the rocks as far as possible with a strong light to determine which way the moss or banding layers lie. Light cuts taken off an end and a side, at right angles to the layers, will then reveal whether the best scene or effect can be obtained by slabbing from end to end or from side to side. As this material probably has rolled hundreds of miles down turbulent streams, nearly all of it is cracked, some badly and some only to a depth of one-fourth inch to one-half inch. These cracks have to be taken into consideration when sawing, to get the largest slabs with best dendritic, scenic, or color effect free from fracture. Sometimes a fine scenic piece may have cracks running across the rock and down through the scene at fairly close intervals making it appear as though nothing of value could be sawed. By turning the rock over 90 degrees sidewise in the saw clamp and taking a cut or two, more solid material often can be found or at least material which will cut nice small stones of ring size.

One type which frequently has been sawed wrong is the flat layer type which the old time agate hunters call "splitters." This type has layers of agate alternated with minute, close-grained quartz crystal layers, spaced about the thickness of a saw cut. Experienced hunters can readily tell this type and with a rock hammer can part the agate layers through the quartz crystals almost as smoothly as if sawed. Some of this type have beautiful black or red dendritic sprays lying flat in the agate layers. It is one of the showiest types found in this deposit. It is not always easy to discern this type, as a rough coating of agate often forms on the outside. Other types show the flat, layered structure exposed, but they look so rough and poor that they are often passed up as of no value. By sawing off a small end the layers will be uncovered and the edges of the dendrites can be seen if they are present. If this type is exposed and shows dendritic possibilities after sawing off an end, the opposite end should then be squared off also to better enable the clamping of the rock. After this is done the rock can be set up in the clamp and sawed parallel to the layers.

As only a very few specimens of this type carry the fine large sprays do not be disappointed if the first few do not have them. About the time you are ready to give up one of the poorest looking pieces may have that fine spray you are looking for. Some of the best sprays the writer has were found by "taking just one more cut." This was especially true with some that were milky in color and impossible to see into.

Many people who are used to sawing the thunder-egg type agates get used to sawing each nodule through the center to expose the pattern, moss, or plume. While this method works well with those nodules, it cannot be used to the best advantage with Montana material. As in the "splitter" type it would probably ruin the best sprays as the larger and better ones usually lie toward the center. Sawing across them would render them valueless. (Continued on Page 44.)

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(Continued from Page 42)

Another type has concentric layers or flat dendrites lying parallel to the shortest circumference of the rock and extending to the center. These are usually hard to cut as the rock will have to be set up parallel to the largest flat layer and a cut or two made. It will have to be turned then to the next largest layer or possibly the opposite side and a cut or two taken off and so on down to the center layers or until the dendritic moss runs out. This may seem complicated but some agates are almost square in shape with dendrites lying fairly flat (as on the four sides of a box), and some beauties can be cut from these. Even some of those that look curved to the contours of the nodule can be saved. If the rock is clear enough to see how they lie, a cut can be figured out to get the largest spray or dendrite by taking a fairly thick slab and then trimming and grinding the slab to a high oval stone. These show the pattern to a very good advantage when curved and the stone ground down so the design is near the surface. The writer recently sawed a spray over one inch in diameter out of a curved nodule of this type that is a beauty.

Some flat shaped rocks having flat deposited dendrites in layers through the rock can be cut across the layers to get good scenic effects. These dendrites have to be quite thick and usually look as well cut this way as they would by sawing to show them flat. Some of the finest scenes and figures are found by sawing through the large, thickly formed dendrites. This type is usually widely spaced through the rock and in clear material so each can be picked out and the saw cuts figured to saw through the dendrites. While it may seem a waste to saw through a fine, thick dendrite, it usually does give the best scenic effect. A thick, new saw should never be used for this, however, as it cuts away too much of the rock bearing fine designs. In fact, a very thin saw will give much better results on practically every type of agate from the Yellowstone River deposits.

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