



ROCKHOUND RAMBLINGS

OCTOBER 2020 • PASADENA LAPIDARY SOCIETY® • PASADENA, CA

President's Message



Dear Fellow Members,

September was a month of challenges, wildfires, riots, protests and Covid-19. I am hoping that October will bring us cooler weather and calmer conditions on all fronts.

The Board meeting and membership meeting was well attended, productive, and informative. Michelle Vandebroek, Vice President and Membership Chair, is doing an excellent job organizing our speakers. Alyson Nishimura gave the Rock of The Month talk and Brad Smith spoke on Jewelry Making Tips and shortcuts. Both of these speakers kept our attention and were very enjoyable. I look forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting on October 20th.

Michelle will have an article in this bulletin about the speakers for our next membership meeting on Zoom. Marcia Goetz will be hosting the meeting, so she will send everyone an email with the date, time, and a link to join the meeting. Many members comment on how much they are enjoying the meetings on Zoom.

As a note, membership dues will be payable starting October 1st and delinquent December 31st. Make a note on your calendar to get your dues in to Phil Lahr, Treasurer. You can send your check to the mail box address or PayPal (available on the website). Phil is required to submit information on current members to the CFMS on December 31st.

Stay Home and Stay Safe.

– Ellen Ferrell, President

Pasadena Lapidary Society®

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Carving Montana Agate

By Sylvia Cliffe

Many years ago, when my husband and I were planning a trip to Montana, a friend in the club said that he would put us in touch with his father, Mr. Cambell, who was a Montana agate hunter.

When we arrived in Montana, we contacted him and made plans to agate hunt the next day. He took us to his favorite spots where we had a great time collecting. At the end of the day, we had about half a bucket of nice agates, but as we were about to leave, Mr. Cambell took his bucket and emptied it into ours, explaining that he had plenty at home and we had come a long way to get there. Back at home, many stones were sliced and made into beautiful cabs.



Many years later, I heard a knock at the front door. On the other side stood Mr. Cambell, who was holding a bag in his hand. He explained that he had been to a specialist in Los Angeles, who told him that he had little time left. Consequently, he wanted to sell his best Montana agate to someone who would appreciate it. Mr. Cambell offered me 10 – 12 agates for \$10. Many of those agates were cut and polished.

During quarantine, I needed something interesting to do. My mind drifted towards the remainder of the Montana agates. After moving many boxes to get to them, I found the desired bucket.



I have had lots of experience with agates, so I separated them into piles: not much color or dendrites, too cracked, beautiful color, dendrites, and investigate further.

Some of the more rounded agates went into the slab saw, flattened one side and glued it to wood. Other stones were laid away to trade or give away.

According to legend, Montana Agate is known for its ability to stabilize energy and calm your worries. With all the frustration of not being able to go outside, I decided to do a couple of Montana agate carvings. One agate was a thick slab with a lot of color. The other slab was an end cut which showed dendrites. I diligently worked both stones to bring out a design I was pleased with. They were polished in eight steps and each took a brilliant shine.



So many happy, fruitful hours were spent carving, putting my mind and soul at peace.

Officers, Trustees, and Committee Chairs

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Trustees

Marcia Goetz, Chris Kyte, Joe Goetz

Committee Chairs

Annual Show	Ellen Ferrell	Michelle Vandenbroeck (Co-Chair)
Bulletin	Jared Nishimura	Education Joan Harrison
Display Table	Ferdie Sanchez	Historian TBA
Field Trips	Rex Nishimura	Librarian Jennifer Jang
Hospitality	Mona Ross	Publicity Elizabeth Weston
Membership	Yvette Fitzgerald	Sunshine Ellen Ferrell
Social Media	Elizabeth Weston	Ways & Means Philip Lahr
Technology	Ben Shutman	Workshop Carolyn Duncan
Webmaster	Elizabeth Weston	

Membership

Membership per calendar year is \$25; for additional adults at the same address, \$15. Junior members are \$10. There is an initiation fee of \$10 per person to cover costs of name badges, etc.

Renewals are due in October and delinquent after December 31. Mail checks to PO Box 5025, Pasadena, CA 91117-0025.

Meetings

Board Meetings – 1st Thursday of the month

7 p.m. at Matt Denny's Ale House
145 E Huntington Dr, Arcadia

Dinner at 6 p.m. PLS members are welcome.

****Editor's Note: This month's meeting is through Zoom.****

Workshop – Canceled

9 a.m.–5 p.m. \$3 for half-day, \$5 for a full day. Equipment instruction, liability waivers, eye protection, and closed-toe shoes are required. For directions, please call (909) 455-4360 (cell) or (909) 593-2781, or email gem.quest38@gmail.com. Bring lunch!

Junior members 9 and older are welcome with adult supervision.

Program Meetings – 3rd Tuesday of the month

Doors open at 6 p.m. Meeting is 6:30–8:45 p.m.
Pasadena Central Library, 285 E Walnut St.

****Editor's Note: This month's meeting is through Zoom.****

Contact Us

Email: info@PasadenaLapidary.org **Instagram:** /PasadenaLapidary

Facebook: Pasadena Lapidary Society **Twitter:** @pasalapidary

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Editor: Jared Nishimura pasadenalapeditor@gmail.com

Send articles by the 15th of the previous month for publication in next month's issue. However, no article guaranteed to make the next issue.

Program Meeting – October 20th



Please join us for the October general meeting. Once again, we will host a "virtual" meeting using Zoom. If you do not have Zoom, you can download the app from your device app store. For computers, visit www.Zoom.us and go to Resources and select "download Zoom client."

The Rock of the Month will be presented by Paolo Sanchez, who will be speaking about Blueschist and its relation to past California landscapes.

Our featured speaker for October will be Professor George R. Rossman. He is the recipient of the inaugural Dana Medal of the Mineralogical Society of America in 2001, and the Richard P. Feynman Prize for Excellence in Teaching at the Caltech in 2004. George R. Rossman is Professor of Mineralogy in the Division of Geological and Planetary Sciences at the California Institute of Technology.



Professor Rossman will share his experience of travelling to the various mineral mines in Myanmar, including the Jade mines and the discovery of the elusive "Painite."

We are looking for members who would like to present the "Rock of the Month" (ROTM) at an upcoming general meetings. The ROTM is a 5-8 minute presentation, where members may feature a stone or mineral of their choice. It is a fun way to share your interest with your fellow members. If you are interested or would like more information, please reach out to Michelle VandenBroeck at vndnbr7@aol.com.

– Michelle Vandenbroeck, Vice-President

PLS Merchandise Available!

To order PLS t-shirts (\$10), ball caps (\$11), and vests (\$15), contact Ellen Ferrell: (727) 512-0381 or Ellenbf2007@aol.com.

Workshop – Canceled for October

At our September General Membership meeting, our speaker was Brad Smith, author of Bench Tips for Making Jewelry. Many of his tips will be useful when we are able to return to our workshop. I especially was interested in the handmade jigs that made the job easier. Members will be notified when we are able to resume with our workshop.

– Carolyn Duncan

Time to renew for 2021!!

Looking forward to the new year and a return to lapidary fun, now is the time to renew your PLS membership. Dues must be received by December 31 to keep your membership current.
\$25 for primary member
\$15 for each additional adult at the same address
\$10 for each Junior member (under 18 years)

Please mail your check to Pasadena Lapidary Society, P.O. Box 5025, Pasadena, CA 91117. For questions about payment or PLS activities, please contact Ellen Ferrell at (727) 512-0381 or Ellenbf2007@aol.com. – Yvette Fitzgerald, Membership Chair

Brad's Bench Notes



“Do Bezels Shrink?”

The engineer in me says there's no reason a bezel should shrink when I solder it onto a base plate, but I sometimes find that the stone won't quite fit into the bezel that was perfect just before soldering.

If that ever happens to you, here's a fix that usually works for those times when there's just a minor problem. I file or sand the stone down a little around its base. For soft cabs like turquoise, lapis, jet or Howlite, you can use a sanding stick. Harder cabs like jasper or agates will require a diamond file. In a pinch, a ruby nail file from the drugstore will work.

There are two important things to remember when doing this. First, you can only make a minor adjustment to the stone's size. All filing or sanding has to be hidden by the bezel because it takes the polish off the stone.

Secondly, remember to round off all sharp edges on the bottom of the stone. A sharp edge here might sit on a little extra solder that's in the bottom joint of your bezel. Just a little bump here can put enough stress the stone to risk breakage when you burnish the bezel down over the stone.

Learn New Jewelry Tricks and Techniques in Brad's Jewelry-Making Books: [Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)

Member-to-Member

This is a nice little buff station for jewelry or stones. If the way the stairs are warped is a factor, this could be just the ticket to polish your next batch of dilithium crystals. Asking \$20.



Most items from previous bulletins are still available. Contact Phil Lahr at (818) 926-3163 or plkslahr@att.net for more information.

Tri-Color Marble 4WD trip

9AM Saturday, October 17, 2020

This month's local field trip will be to the famous tri-color marble quarry in the Sidewinder Mountains near Victorville. Marble is a great beginner material, because it's relatively soft and exceptionally easy to work on. Tri-color marble makes a wonderful carving material, cab, or garden rock. We'll also visit an old talc mine and search for other colors of marble.

The tentative meeting spot is the old Victorville Tailgate location on Stoddard Wells Road. From this point on, you will need 4WD, high clearance preferred. As usual, don't be late or you will miss our departure. Plan to be there by 8:45AM because I will leave promptly at 9AM! If you have any questions, contact me at rexch8@yahoo.com – Rex Nishimura

Palos Verdes Field Trip (9-19-20)

By Rex Nishimura

I'd been to the popular Palos Verdes rock collecting spot before, but this was surreal. Clean air, blue skies and about 50 surfers bobbing in the warm water. We'd been blanketed in Bobcat Fire smoke for the past 2 weeks, and I wasn't used to this. The only smoke to be seen in PV was the frothy white vapor from the pounding surf. 300 feet below me was a vast beach of smoothly rounded rock. This day was destined to be something different.

The trip began promptly at 9 AM as I led a group of 5 hopeful rock hunters down Bluff Cove Trail. (Another 25 rock hunters arrived later in the morning.)



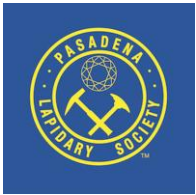
The steep path to Bluff Cove seemed longer than usual which I attributed to being out of shape due to the dearth of recent field trips. Once at the bottom, we saw the undulating surf hard at work rolling thousands of fist sized stones up and down the beach. The clattering noise of rock on rock impact was alarming and it felt like I was somehow stuck on the inside of a rock tumbling barrel.

In the midst of this rock salad we found various seam agates, green jasper/serpentine, and occasional grayish blue glaucophane. Collecting was a bit problematic. Unlike a rock tumbler, there was no on/off switch for the surf, and we had to bravely snatch our prizes from unrelenting breakers. Almost everyone got wet.

Two hours of collecting was enough for most people and we retreated to a conveniently situated shady palm tree. Michelle announced that she had found a nice soft rock to sit on, and I wondered what Mohs hardness would make a good seat. My soft schist boulder was not very comfortable at all. While we ate, we marveled at our ever growing pile of green rocks. The mossy green agates went into the collecting bucket; the leaverites went back into the rock tumbler.

One of the best things about the trip is meeting the 30 interesting people in attendance. We had 3 university geology majors and one teacher attending this meeting. As a testament to their diligent studies, when talking to them, I elected to talk less and nod more. Atticus, Paolo, Evan, and David, thank you very much! Another attendee was not searching for agates and colorful rocks, Elaine was searching for the perfect shape – round and triangular shaped stones were her target. Geometry in rocks is another subject that I don't understand. There were also 11 minors who had a great time swimming and exploring the rocky beach.

The tide's peak at exactly 11:11 AM marked the end of a special day, and we all agreed with Richard's announcement that, "the worst day at the beach is better than the best day at home." The tide receded and we retreated--back to those smoky skies and broiling temperatures. But for 30 people, it was a great day at the beach. As the waves went back to the ocean, we knew it was time to go home.



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*California Desert Tortoise.
 Photo Credit: San Diego Zoo*

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
October 2020				1 Board mtg	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 PLS Field Trip
18	19	20 Program mtg (All members are welcome to join!!)	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31