



ROCKHOUND RAMBLINGS

APRIL 2022 • PASADENA LAPIDARY SOCIETY® EDITOR: ALYSON NISHIMURA



Photo by Darren Nunis on Unsplash

~A Pilot's Life & Mission During WWII-Dependent Upon the Gem Cutter~

I am finding really wonderful stories in old copies of *The Mineralogist* for future articles for you. The magazine was publishing long before the AFMS was founded. What is so special about the old publications are the stories about federation news and news of mineralogy at the time. Once I find an interesting history topic, I then go looking for more information on the subject, if there is any to find. As Rockhounds and Mineralogists, we have quite a remarkable history that we can feel very proud to be a part of. During WWII, there were hundreds of experienced mineral collectors who, although too old to qualify for military service, played a highly important role for the security of our country. They cut quartz crystals for frequency control in communication instruments and radar. Sapphires were cut to make precision instruments used in airplanes, bombers and battleships. Pilot lives and the success of their missions depended upon the lapidary skills of the gem cutter.

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Editor: Alyson 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 be published or make the next issue.

Inspiration Unearthed Coming in August

The show for this year has been rescheduled for **August 20-21, 2022**. It seems so long ago that we were able to hold our show and in fact the last one was the CFMS show and convention at the L.A. County Fair Grounds. That was lots of fun and work.

We will have a show meeting soon via zoom. Anyone that wants to attend can - the more the merrier. Just let me know and I'll send you a link. Email is marcia.pls.emails@gmail.com

Meetings

Board Meetings – 1st Thursday of the month. Members welcome to join. Contact Marcia Goetz for more information.

Program Meetings – 3rd Tuesday of the month

Contact Marcia Goetz at marcia.pls.emails@gmail.com

Pasadena Lapidary Society®

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A Pilot's Life & Mission During WWII-Dependent Upon the Gem Cutter

Quartz and sapphires were essential to the war effort. In a bomber, there were about one-hundred sapphires in the plane's instruments. In a battleship, there were about four thousand sapphire bearings. In 1940, America was completely dependent on Europe for sapphires. When the war came, an American company, Linde Air Products, created the synthetic sapphire. The creation of synthetic sapphires was vital to the war effort. The stones were only used for the war effort and not for jewelry. Quartz crystal was used for frequency control in radio transmission, radar and other precision devices. The quality of the quartz crystal mines in Arkansas was considered finer than Brazil's, and the mines in Arkansas came under federal control during the war. Gemstones, minerals, and the gem cutter have always played important roles throughout history, all around the world. No wonder mankind holds cutters and their stones in admiration.

By Jennifer Haley, AFMS Historian

Republished from AFMS Newsletter, February 2022

Pasadena Lapidary Annual Show

Plans are progressing for the show. Nancy Robb is in charge of the Children's Area and has been busy collecting material. Joe Goetz is in charge of display cases and Armando Pedroza is in charge of the silent auction. We will have another meeting on April 16 (a Saturday) at 7:00 PM. A few folks have expressed a desire to meet in person soon for the planning and we may do that in May. In the meantime, I'm trying to decide what gemstone I want to make a necklace and pendant out of for the raffle and I'm trying to decide on blue or red at this point. Have you given thought to what you want to donate yet? Be sure to save the dates of August 19-21 for helping with set up all the way through tear down!

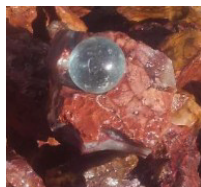
Two Unicorns and a Sand Trap

Saturday, March 19 turned out to be a good day to rock hound at Lavic. We left home under the light of a full moon that was soon hidden by clouds. The day was warm and dry with a little wind starting in the afternoon. Before the meet up, I scouted what I hoped could be an additional stop. The road to Jasper Hill turned out to be sandier than I wanted to take the group on and the old railroad crossing no longer exists. Reaching that site now requires a hike of about a mile. Who was it that called them "Those lying rock books?" On the other hand, I did spot a light green glass ball, a little less than an inch across perched atop the sandy berm just like it was waiting to be found about the time I turned around. I picked it up and raced back to the meeting spot to get the show started. We had just over a dozen people join the trip and even disoriented a few teens by taking them where their

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phones had no service. Hopefully we will see them again. Spotting treasures started right at the meeting point. Curtis found some tiny moonstone crystals in a pale matrix and a geocache right beside the road. The first stop was a half mile down the ridge and there was plenty of jasper in a variety of colors. The busy railroad tracks were an attraction to some and darn if Curtis didn't come back with a second glass ball he found buried in the rock along the tracks. After a while, we moved out west along the old road and tried another spot hoping for a little more variety. The jasper was a little less abundant there, but we did get to see some of it embedded in the old road surface.



In order to search south of the tracks and avoid the sand near the railroad undercrossing, we drove west a few miles until National Trails Highway, crossed the tracks, then drove back to a few hundred feet from where we started before heading south to look for a spot where the jasper tends to have a little more agate in it and often has nice druzy pockets. We never made it. The road turned down a wash, the sand got deep, and then the road became impassable. We turned around, and had a few harrowing minutes getting out of the sand trap and back to a good road, but everybody made it. I tried another road that dead ended at the end of a ridge. We searched that area and were able to find some rock including two larger cuttable chunks of brecciated jasper.



Half the group was ready to head for home after this. The rest searched along the railroad tracks for more of the glass balls. I have heard stories of the balls found along the tracks near where the club camped for years. Apparently glass was once transported in that form to wherever it was made into finished product and some of the balls bounced out. The two that we had found earlier were the first I had ever seen. Are more still there? If so, they evaded our eyes this time. I am convinced Curtis and I found a couple of unicorns, some of the last signs of this little bit of history.

Sue and Steve led me through a small portion of the lava field at Pisgah Crater after the trip. I can't believe I have driven past this site for years and never knew what is there. A gentleman we met told us there are over 300 lava tube entrances scattered across the massive lava field. Lava tubes are "caves" formed when the surface of a lava flow cools and hardens, but some of the molten rock underneath keeps flowing and leaves an opening under the surface.



Several groups were camped there and we could see clusters of them around various entrances. The only rock to collect here would be jet black basalt and pumice, but with a good light and some head protection, exploring the tubes is always fun.

Phil Lahr

Workshop April 9, 2022

The workshop is open so consider an afternoon visit! The bolo making workshop is still coming our way. To get ready, make yourself a large cabachon of almost any shape and type of stone you might want to wear or give. The back should be flat and opaque stones are generally better. Workshops are now on the second SATURDAY of the month.

The April workshop will be held on Saturday, April 9, from 9 am to 3 pm. Cost is \$5 for the full day or \$3 for either 9 to 12 or 12 to 3. Consider coming a little later in the day since cabbing equipment and saws are more available after noon.

The saws and cabbing units will be available as usual. First timers need to attend the orientation which is held at the beginning of the workshop. To reserve your spot and get directions to the shop, call Marcia (626) 260-7239. An introductory class is generally offered after the orientation and experienced members are available to help all day.

Access the workshop by walking up the alley on the west side of the building and use the sliding door there. Please do not use the door at the loading dock.

Field Trip on April 10

Following Walt Lombardo's talk on Southern California's pegmatites, I plan to have a field trip to the Ocean View Mine, one of the fee digs in the Pala area. The mines in that area are famous for tourmaline and other precious stones. The way a fee dig works is we try to get several members together so the cost per person is reduced. You pay the mine owner prior to going into the dig area. There is a pile of mine tailings placed in the middle of a circle of tables and you go out to the pile, get a bucket of dirt and come back to your sifting table and comb through the dirt, find goodies, and repeat. Many have found treasures; many have gone home a little sad. We are not guaranteed anything other than a good time digging for something pretty. If you plan to attend please call 626 260-7239.

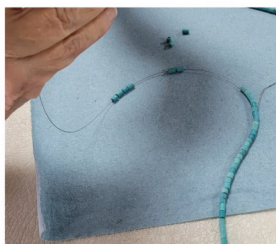
Marcia Goetz

Member-to-Member

Ellen has a DVD/VHS player that she will give to a member who can use it. Contact her at ellenbf2007@aol.com If anyone has a trim saw they would like to sell, they seem to be one of the most sought-after items by members. Do you have something to sell or are you looking for something other members might have? To have your message shown here, contact Phil at plkslahr@att.net by the 15th of the month.



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Top row: A pair of ladybug agate (Sue Dekany), pair of agates before polish and after polish (Christine Tringali), obsidian (Jim Graffius)

Middle row: Turquoise with silver on iron wood Pendant worn by Ed Imlay, a large specimen from a cut of amygules in agate (David Lacy), petrified wood (Sylvia Cliffe)

Bottom row: Stringing a necklace of turquoise beads (Bonnie Lacy with guidance by Mona Ross), agate with bands (Elaine Ige), a specimen from a cut of agate with beautiful blue and colorful inclusions (Christine Tringali)



Dear Fellow Members,

We are planning on holding our April general meeting in person. Finally!! I know we got to meet in December and that was great fun, but a regular meeting will be really nice. Our last zoom meeting was attended by around 30 people, and Walt Lombardo was the speaker. Walt gave a program on Gem Pegmatites of Southern California, and we learned a lot about the geology and the types of rock found in the pegmatites. Some of the tourmalines and related gems found in Southern California are world famous. One of the members showed us her tourmaline she had gotten at the Ocean View Mine.

The April program will feature Janie Duncan and she will do a program on The History of Beads. The program looks at how beads have been used and created and she has many beads for us to look at. She presented the program once at a Whittier meeting and we really enjoyed it. Since we will be in person it would be nice if we can also include the 5-minute Rock Talk. Please let me know if you want to give a short talk on your favorite rock. Also, since we will be meeting in person again we will have our Display Table. Ferdie Sanchez, Display Table Chair is asking for items for the next meeting. If you have a beautiful gemstone or even an ugly rock you want to show off bring it with you.

Sincerely, Marcia Goetz, *President*

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

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