



# **Gem & Lapidary News**

March 2016

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**Gem & Lapidary News** is the official publication of the GEM AND LAPIDARY COUNCIL of NEW SOUTH WALES Inc, PO Box 163, Wentworthville, NSW, 2145. The executive and workforce of the Council are entirely composed of delegates from member Clubs. Council is NOT an autonomous body. The Gem & Lapidary Council is a member of AFLACA (Australian Federation of Lapidary and Allied Crafts Association).

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Property-Equipment Officer	John Behrens
Competition Judges:	Wally Dove & John Behrens
Education Officer	vacant
GEMBOREE Coordinator	Col Wright
GEMKHANA Coordinator	vacant
Printer	Arthur Roffey

**Website: <http://www.gemlapidarycouncilnsw.org.au/>**

#### **COUNCIL MEETINGS**

EXECUTIVE - Meet monthly, fourth Wednesday of the month, 1pm, at Clubrooms, Parramatta-Holroyd Lapidary Club, 73 Fullager Rd, Wentworthville NSW

**Visitors welcome to attend**

#### **SUBSCRIPTIONS to the Gem & Lapidary News**

\$20 if posted bulk to your Club  
\$25 if posted to members' private address  
\$30 for non-members of the G&L Council

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Full page - \$40 per issue  
1/2 page - \$25  
1/3 page - \$20

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## **NB: CHANGE OF POSTAL ADDRESS FOR THE G&LC NSW**

**Gem & Lapidary Council NSW, PO Box 163, Wentworthville NSW, 2145**

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## **NEXT COUNCIL MEETING**

Wednesday April 27, at the Clubrooms, Parramatta-Holroyd  
Lapidary Club, 73 Fullagar Rd, Wentworthville, 1pm

Please attend - you will be made very welcome ♥

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## **DEADLINE FOR APRIL 2016 ISSUE**

March 16 (third Wednesday of the month, plus a few days grace)

**ATTENTION: CLUB EDITORS,**

**CONTACT THE G&L EDITOR TO INCLUDE YOUR CLUB'S NEWS**

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Disclaimer:

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# G&L COUNCIL NEWS & INFORMATION

## Minutes from G&L Council Meeting, February 24, 2016

The meeting was opened at 1pm by President Barbara Try (Northern Districts) who welcomed delegates from the following Clubs: Minsoc (Arthur Roffey OAM), Central Coast (Tony Try), Blaxland (Pam & Alec Gardiner), Blue Mountains (Mick Lane & Una King), Port Hacking (Colin Wright), Parramatta-Holroyd (John & Marilyn Behrens), Goulburn (Sue & Joe O'Neil) and Western Suburbs (Shirley & Ainslie Flynn & Marcia Hill). **Apologies:** Bankstown (J Ball OAM), NSW (Lily Murphy), Port Hacking (Wally Dove), Parramatta-Holroyd (Ron Jones), Hawkesbury Valley (John Vincent).

**J&R Report:** The GEMBOREE 2018 competition schedule was received on February 1st with a number of errors noted. Barbara to respond with recommendations from NSW. Barbara is presently organising judges needed for the Hawkesbury Show. Judging date April 11th 2016.

**G&L News:** [Due to changed circumstances, a new editor is required for the *G&L News*]

**Education Report:** Nothing to report

**GEMKHANA Report October 1-2-3:** The Hawkesbury Showground at Clarendon (near Richmond) has been booked. The \$1,900 hire fee and booking form needs to be returned plus \$500 extra for tailgate area. New power leads for 3&4ft showcases to be fitted Tuesday prior to show. Desperately need coordinator to run the show and volunteers to help. Competition schedule is now on the website, closing date 19th August, judging date September 10th. Suggestion for Clubs to coordinate and run future GEMKHANAS to be further investigated.

**GEMBOREE 2016, Tasmania – Easter:** 550 entries have now been judged. 150 entries to be judged in Ulverstone by NSW judges. A proposal to Video Conference AFLACA meeting was discussed and our delegate was requested to vote no. Four-hundred booklets for GEMBOREE 2017 to be taken to Ulverstone.

**GEMBOREE 2017, Lithgow – Easter:** Ainslie Flynn of Western Suburbs Club has set the stone Arthur provided for the raffle 1st prize. Thank you both. Colin Wright has a draft risk management plan ready for Lithgow Council. Reiterating that tailgaters insurance must be in their own name. Ideas for a gate shed. Lithgow Council to be approached for



loan of site van. Booklet now signed off and ready for printing. Colin Wright to liaise with Alan McRae and collect booklets for distribution. Catering to be followed up by Marilyn Behrens.

**GENERAL BUSINESS:** An email was received from Mr Emmanuel Vidal (Central Coast) regards taxation status of clubs. After discussion, Arthur Roffey moved to refer it to delegates to take and peruse for discussion at a later date. Marcia Hill (Western Suburbs) was presented with her AFLACA accreditation as an enamelling judge. Vale Cyril Kovak of CK Minerals Victoria who passed away recently. NSW Lapidary Club has an open day Saturday March 12, 136 Reservoir Street, Surry Hills.

Meeting dates for 2016: March (no meeting), April 27, May 25, June 22, July 27, August 24, September 21, October 26, November 23, December 7.

**Next meeting:** Wednesday, April 27th, 2016, 1pm, at 73 Fullagar Rd, Wentworthville.

Meeting closed at 2.35pm.



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## OPALISED PEARLS FOUND IN SPOIL HEAP

In a world first, two opalised pearls have recently been unearthed in the Coober Pedy opal fields of South Australia.



The two four-millimetre specimens, dating back 65 million years, were uncovered by two opal miners, Dale Price and Tanja Burk, who were sorting through a spoil heap.

According to the *ABC News* story, Dr Ben Grguric from the SA Museum, said that “opals formed when seas dried up and alkaline soil dissolved the silica in certain rocks, as well as bones and shells.” He says that “a lot of the opal fossils, including bones and shells, were formed during the cretaceous period, which was an era earlier than 65 million years ago and the age of the dinosaurs.”


Dr Grguric informed *ABC News* that the opals were sent to the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation at Lucas Heights in Sydney, where they were scanned by a neutron imaging instrument, with the results indicating the typically concentric structure consistent with pearls.

The pearls are currently on display for a short time only at the South Australian Museum in Adelaide.

## **EDITOR FOR G&L NEWS NEEDED**

Unfortunately, Theresa Mason is stepping down as Editor. While she can stay for another issue or so, this position must be filled **asap**. If you are interested, please contact the G&LC Editor or Secretary. Theresa can assist with the transition process ♥

## **NEWS FROM THE TASMANIA CLUB**

The Tasmania Lapidary Club has lost two long-term fossickers, Helen Bantoft, and Edna Griggs. There are some nice stories on them in their recent Club newsletter. Edna Griggs will be long remembered in the world of science by donating an outstanding unknown type of Lune River petrified tree fern to visiting professor, Don Tidwell, who named it *Osmunddacaulis griggsii* in her honour [NB see page 141: [http://www.tmag.tas.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/67984/Squires\\_catalogue\\_final.pdf](http://www.tmag.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/67984/Squires_catalogue_final.pdf)]. The newsletter also published a story on Don who passed away in November. He was a major Club contributor, visiting from Utah four times in the eighties, and naming eight new species of petrified tree fern types after Tasmanian Club members. 

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# TIME, AND AGAIN

by Marilyn Behrens

I love looking through Club magazines and commercial magazines - recent and from long ago. I learn so much of how things were done and how they are now done. There has been so much improvement in technology, so much experimentation in techniques and materials that they have also progressed way past what early lapidaries did and knew.

At the same time as I see all these new ways, I cannot help but laugh at the same complaints over all the years. Firstly, grinding wheels are damaged because people cannot get the hang of using the whole width of the wheel; then that sanding discs are torn because too much pressure was used, a mess is left for someone else to clean up, slabs are cut too thin for good cabbing, etc.

I also now see little of people taking time to undertake the type of projects that take a long time – projects such mosaics and intarsia. Yes, I know some people do, some carvers for example put many, many hours into their work, but the people who do take this time are few and far between. There is great satisfaction in doing these types of projects and they usually attract lots of attention and admiration.

Something else I see is fewer lapidary suppliers/shops as the years go by. I guess these business are not profitable enough these days, especially since so many people purchase their requirements on-line, directly from the kind of places the shopkeepers used to deal with.

**GEMKHANA** will be held at the Hawkesbury Showground on October 1-3.

The competition between lapidaries from across the State, and often other States too, will inspire new and older members to try a new aspect of this great hobby.

The Museum of Comparative Zoology will feature a model of the fierce Albertosaurus, along with many other pre-historic models.

There will be traders and tailgaters, as well as demonstrations by experienced club members, and the free activities for children will keep their interest for some time.

Camping is available. Wheelchair access is easy. Parking is plentiful. Refreshments are top notch.




## CLUB NEWS

**Blaxland Gem & Mineral Club** will be holding their Club Open Day on Saturday 7th May at the Progress Association Hall, Valley Rd, Valley Heights. Activities will include sales of rocks and slabs, gem cutting and polishing demonstrations, and sausage sizzle.

**Campbelltown Lapidary Club** will be holding their Open Day on the 12th March at the Clubrooms, Lot 1 Bensley Rd, Macquarie Fields. They will be open from 9am to 2pm with lots of slabs, rough, crystals, handmade jewellery and an opal cutting display. BBQ, cakes and hot & cold drinks will be available. The Club's next big event is their Annual Gem, Mineral & Jewellery Show which will be held at The Greg Percival Centre, Oxford Road, Ingleburn, on 9th & 10th July. Silverwork classes have resumed, including casting work. The Club are planning a field trip to Inverell in April.

The **Canberra Lapidary Club** have several courses coming up, including cabochon cutting and faceting. The Club extends thanks for recent donations of minerals, opal rough, and cabochon material to the Club, as well as a donation of a saw and motors. Two new six-wheel cabbing units have been installed, which use a gravity-fed water pipe for cooling. The new units enable more members to use the machines at once. The Club's AGM is coming up this month.

**GEMBOREE** 2016 is on at Ulverstone Showgrounds in Tasmania this month on March  25-29th. Here's hoping for a successful national event showcasing the best in lapidaries and allied crafts. Check the Australian Federation of Lapidary and Allied Crafts Associations website for more info: <http://aflaca.org.au/gemboree/>.

**GEMKHANA** is the Annual Gem & Mineral Show and Competition of lapidaries from all over NSW, presented by the Lapidary Council of NSW Inc, at Hawkesbury Showground, Clarendon NSW, over the Labour Day long weekend, 1-3 October. Competition entries must be received by Friday 19th August, 2016. Check the Gem & Lapidary Council of NSW website for more information: <http://gemlapidarycouncilnsw.org.au/gemkhana/>

**Illawarra Lapidary Club** has a full calendar of fossicking trips planned for the year with one trip planned for every month, with the March trip being to Kangaroo Valley looking for petrified wood and jasper, followed by a five-day trip to Tambar Springs in April. Members are reminded that Club fees were due at the end of February. The AGM will be held in March, and all positions will be declared vacant. The secretary and minute secretary are not standing for re-election. Due to postage increases, hard

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copies of the Club newsletter will no longer be mailed out unless members pay postage. The newsletter is available by email and on the Club website. Sadly, the Club recorded the passing of another valued member, Victor Raffler. He will be missed.

**Inverell & District Lapidary Club** have a display shelf where members can sell their crafted items, with a 20% commission going to the Club. Thi month's 'Digging the Dirt' member featured Misty, who reported an inherited love of fossicking from her parents as a child in South Africa. Her favourite find is a piece of sugilite from Wessels Mine in South Africa. Over the holidays, Club members lined, plastered and painted the clubhouse walls, built a bookcase and also built a lighted display cabinet.

**Lismore Gem & Lapidary Club** has installed two extra coarse wheels and warns members to be careful when using them. The large diamond saw is temporarily out of action due to motor failure. All members are reminded to sign in and pay their workshop fees when attending, or their membership will be suspended. Volunteers are required for the upcoming GEMFEST.

The **Northern Districts Lapidary Club** have already begun classes for their special interest lapidary groups, focusing on skills needed for their annual exhibition in October. All members are encouraged to enter at least one of their creations in the exhibition, with a hope that the total number of entries in all categories will be increased this year. The Club will be holding their 50th year celebration in June. Long term Club member, Livia Murk, sadly passed on



Enamelling work from a workshop run by the Northern Districts Club



before Christmas. The February Club newsletter features a nice story on Livia's life and lapidary interests.

The **Parramatta-Holroyd Lapidary Club** reminds members to take an interest in the Club's social activities. All ideas to help create social events are welcome, as this will enable new members to become acquainted with older Club members. Clubroom work has been completed and members are now benefitting from the changes. All members were thanked for their efforts in creating much more spacious workspaces. The Club now has a bracelet mandrel available for use. The Club are running specialist classes in shell carving, gem trees, and enamelling. The newsletter reports on a successful trip to Inverell and Tingha which was most enjoyable and rewarding. Members also went to Wallangra for some good tourmaline in quartz finds, and the trip to a commercial lease proved fruitful for sapphire. Sadly, the Club reported the passing of Michael Agius, a member who always brought laughter to everyone and was a great storyteller.

## **GEMKHANA CO-ORDINATOR NEEDED!**



**SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE FOR THIS POSITION**



**GEMKHANA WILL BE HELD ON OCTOBER 1-3**

**AT HAWKESBURY SHOWGROUND**

**CLARENDON NSW**



**ENQUIRIES TO MARILYN 02 9635 8218**

**SECRETARY@GEMPLAPIDARYCOUNCILNSW.ORG.AU**

**NB: The GEMKHANA lapidary competition schedule is on the G&L website**

Helpers for setting up and pulling down of GEMKHANA are also required.

Please consider stepping up and assisting, as events like this require a lot of helpers.

# JUDGING GEMBOREE 2016

by Barbara Try, J & R Chairperson, Gem & Lapidary Council of NSW

While the 2016 GEMBOREE is being held in Tasmania at Ulverstone, the judging of 550 of the entries took place over two weekends in New South Wales. This was because of a lack of qualified judges available in Tasmania. Although this was a big task it was also good practice and experience for the NSW judges who will have to do it all again for the NSW GEMKHANA in October this year and then for the 2017 GEMBOREE run by the NSW Gem and Lapidary Council at Lithgow.

A total of 706 entries were received for the GEMBOREE at Ulverstone, which, given the declining numbers being entered into competitions in recent years is a good number. The 150 odd to be judged at Ulverstone are predominantly made up of minerals and fossils.

After looking at the number of entries it was decided that it would be advantageous to all concerned to try and complete the judging in two long days, rather than spread it over four shorter days. This saved a lot of travelling and time for all concerned. It also gave everyone the next day, Sunday, to recuperate from their efforts!

The judging in Sydney took place at two locations. The first was on the Saturday 30th January in the clubrooms of the Parramatta-Holroyd Lapidary Club. This involved a total of 33 people, made of 14 judges plus 'scribes', catering staff and others manipulating the calculators who spent one very long, but satisfactory day completing all of their allocated tasks. The day finished with a 'bang' as a quite savage storm hit the area, with lightning and thunder directly overhead, resulting in flickering lights and startled gasps from people as we beavered away in the semi-dark trying to finish off work before we had what seemed like an inevitable blackout. Fortunately, this did not occur.

The second round of judging was another long day on the following Saturday the 6th February in the clubrooms of the Central Coast Lapidary Club at Ourimbah. Another 29 people, comprising of 10 different judges and 'scribes', number crunches with their calculators, and catering staff spent another long, but equally satisfactory day, and finished off all the remaining work.

So, from me to everyone who gave of their time and efforts for these two judging days, please accept my gratitude and a heartfelt 'thank you'. I would also hope that the experience and knowledge gained by participating in this exercise ultimately assists you in a small way in your own endeavours in the various crafts.

I also know that the organisers of the Tasmania GEMBOREE greatly appreciate the efforts and assistance all of you have given them by participating in these two days of judging. Thank you all once again.

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# EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

## March

- 5-6 North Brisbane Lapidary Club Gem & Jewellery Show, Bracken Ridge High School,  
Bracken Ridge, Qld
- 6 Newcastle Lapidary Club Rock Auction, Clubhouse, Dora Rd, Newcastle, NSW
- 11-13 Minerama Fossicking, Gem & Jewellery Show, Glen Innes, NSW
- 12 Campbelltown & District Lapidary Club Open Day, Clubhouse, Macquarie Fields, NSW
- 12 Central Coast Annual Rock Auction, Clubhouse, Ourimbah Ck Rd, Ourimbah, NSW
- 12-13 Victorian GEMKHANA Centenary Hall, Norlane, Vic
- 19-20 Hobart Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show, Grandstand Hall, Hobart Showground,  
Glenorchy, Tas
- 19-20 New England Lapidary & Fossicking Club 25th Annual Gem & Craft Show,  
Armidale Showground, NSW
- 25-27 Warwick Rock, Antiques & Collectables Fair, Warwick Showgrounds, Qld
- 25-29 GEMBOREE 2016 Ulverstone Showgrounds, Tas

## April

- 15-17 Hawkesbury Show Lapidary Competition, Hawkesbury Showground, Clarendon, NSW
- 16-17 Canberra Lapidary Club Rock Swap, Exhibition Park, Wagtail Way, ACT
- 16-17 Essendon Gem Show & Rock Swap, Essendon Gem Club, Vic
- 29-29 Canberra Lapidary Club Winter Gemcraft & Mineral Show, Exhibition Park,  
Canberra, ACT
- 29-1 May, Murraylands Gem & Mineral Club Rockarama, Crystal and Craft Fair, Palmer, SA
- 30-1 May, Redcliffe Peninsula Lapidary Club Gem Show, Southern Cross Catholic College,  
Kippa-Ring, Qld

## May

- 7 Blaxland Gem & Mineral Club Open Day, Progress Association Hall, The Valley  
Rd, Valley Heights, NSW
- 14-15 Lismore Gem & Lapidary Club GEMFEST, Lismore Showgrounds, NSW

## June

- 4-5 Gunyah Lapidary Club Display, Mt Coot-tha Garden Auditorium, Brisbane, Qld
- 11-12 Grafton Gem & Craft Show Grafton Showgrounds, Grafton, NSW
- 25 Gold Coast Gem & Craft Show Pizzey Park, Miami, Qld

## July

- 8-9 'Queen of Gems' International Boulder Opal Jewellery & Fashion Design Awards,  
Winton Opal Tradeshow, Winton, Qld
- 9-10 Campbelltown & District Lapidary Club Gem, Mineral & Jewellery Show, Greg  
Percival Community Centre, Ingleburn, NSW

**NEXT BIG EVENT  
FOR THE  
GEM & LAPIDARY COUNCIL**



**GEMBOREE**

**March 25-29**

Ulverstone Showgrounds, Tasmania

