

CRYSTAL LINES

NORTH BRISBANE LAPIDARY CLUB Inc.

Newsletter November 2011

**PRESIDENTS
REPORT**

**POSITIONS
VACANT
UPCOMING
EVENTS**



**If undeliverable, return to
North Brisbane Lapidary
club Inc.
P.O. Box 1248
Toombul Q. 4012**

**SURFACE
MAIL**

NORTH BRISBANE LAPIDARY CLUB INC.

Phone: (07) 3260 7025. E-mail Club: info@nblc.com.au

WEB SITE: www.nblc.com.au

PATRON Neil Roberts MP
PRESIDENT Stephen Bell
VICE PRESIDENT Barry Waller
SECRETARY Ray Wilson

TREASURER Peter Moller 0447 167 136
MEMBERSHIP Helen Moriarty
LIBRARIAN Mike Mahoney
EDITOR Peter Moller 0447167 136

WORK SESSIONS

Monday 7.30pm-9.30pm
Tuesday 7.00pm-9.00pm
Wednesday 9.00am-12noon
Friday 7.30pm-9.30pm

Open other times by arrangement

WORKSHOP FEES

\$3.00 Per work session
\$5.00 Badges members
\$6.00 Badges non-members
\$30.00 Club T-shirts
Free Club bumper stickers

Silver sales @ \$1.30 per gram

JOINING FEES

\$20.00 First member
\$15.00 Second member
\$15.00 Pensioner
\$40.00 Family (at same address)
\$15.00 Associate member
\$15.00 Junior member

CUTTING FEES

Diamond grinders \$1.50 per ½ Hour or part thereof
24" saw 50c per sq inch
14" saw 50c per sq inch
10/12" saw 50c per sq inch
Trim saw 50c per cab
Tumbler hire \$15.00 per month

Annual postage required for *Crystal Lines* - \$6.00 (members only)

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

\$30.00 First member
\$24.00 Second member
\$60.00 Family (2 adults & 2 children 12-18 years)
\$20.00 Pensioner Under 70 Years & Junior members

NBLC CLUBHOUSE ADDRESS

Albert Bishop Park
Nudgee Road
NUNDAH QLD.

POSTAL ADDRESS:

P.O. BOX 1248
TOOMBUL
4012

BASIC REQUIREMENTS NEEDED TO CARRY OUT LAPIDARY WORK (CABS)

- Waterproof apron
- 3 power head loupe, cost approx \$30.00
- 10 power hand loupe
- Dop stick
- Slabbed stone of your choice

BASIC REQUIREMENTS NEEDED TO CARRY OUT FOSSICKING

- Good maps of the area you intend to visit
- 1 x Aluminium sieve 305mm diameter by 3mm, mesh 1/8 inch
- 1 x Aluminium sieve 305mm diameter by 7mm, mesh ¼ inch
- 1 x Small sturdy shovel (not the fold up type)
- 1 x Plastic gold pan
- Footwear – Preferably boots to support ankles
- Headwear – Wide brimmed hat
- Transport - A 4x4 is nice, but a lot of areas can be accessed by conventional vehicles
- Accommodation - Hotels, motels, caravans or camping. This can lead to very enjoyable family bush weekends
- Communication – With the outside world is not necessary, but very handy to have. A mobile phone is useful in case of emergency and we strongly suggest a handheld UHF CB. These cost around \$50-\$100

The above are only the basic requirements to enable you to carry out this hobby. Extra equipment can be obtained at a later date if required. Enjoy yourselves; leave fossicking areas clean for others and some material behind for others – good luck and good fossicking!

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

MANY HAPPY RETURNS

November Birthdays

First Name	Last Name
Sandra	Bell
Dawn	Chapman
Barry	Driver
Dianne M.	Ezzy
Philip	Griffin
Chazz	Harding
Betty	Hawkins
Allen R.	Hutchison
Brian	Lindeberg
Robert	Maxwell
Sue	Mayo
Walter	Pampuch
Tom	Power
Marie	Root
Patricia	Sharpe
Lincoln	Trafford

Get Well:

To all those who are unwell or injured please accept our best wishes for a speedy and complete recovery.



Vacancy: Safety Officer

We are looking for a volunteer to take on the role of safety officer after the recent resignation from the position by Jim Lakey.

The safety officer role is not onerous, but it is necessary for someone to be regularly casting an eye over all of the activities and machinery to identify any potential problems before they arise.

Anyone interested, please contact the secretary.

By the way Jim was in the club recently with a nice parcel of opal that he has already found at Lightning Ridge.

POSITIONS VACANT

Field Trip Officer

We are also looking for someone to fill the role of field trip officer. Garry Gatfield has indicated that after 10 years of organising the major field trip each year he is going to take a break. This means that unless someone comes forward and puts up a plan for 2012 there will not be a major field trip next year.

Positions Vacant 2012.

Contact Jim Jeavons jjoz58@tpg.com.au , all enquiries.

1. **Website Manager** wanted for 2012. Someone is required to maintain the clubs website for 2012. Minimum effort required as the only things updated, on a monthly basis, are the "gem show" and "What's on" pages. If your spending more than a an hour or two a month on it, then you are doing something wrong. All software required is supplied as well as training.
2. **Show Raffle Co-coordinator required for the 2013 show.** Yes that is the 2013 show. Work needs to start early in 2012 in order to get them ready. The only real work, other then harassing people to get them finished, is in Sep - Nov when they need to be valued, raffle tickets printed and issued for selling. Not a hard job and all information and forms are provided.

THANK YOU

Big thank you to all those members that assisted on the QLACCA stand at the recent Craft Show.

BEGINNERS FACETTING CLASS

Barry Kirkham and **Gary Gatfield**, completed a beginners facet classon the weekend of the 22nd and 23rd October. As a result we have 3 new factors in the club.

Doug & Linda Forbes, and **Brian Brehmer**, completed their first stone, also **Lee Shute** repeated the class, all students did good work.

Thanks to Barry and Gary for their efforts and for giving up their weekend.

ROCKTOBER OPEN DAY

The day proved to be a lovely sunny day in spite of the rather rocky (no pun intended) start weather wise. Visitors were entertained by club members with displays and demonstrations.

A special; mention must go to **Milton Fox** who went to some considerable trouble to mount his gold fossicking display. His efforts attracted a great deal of interest from the visitors on the day.

His display included: a working gold suction dredge, cradle, a large selection of old and new gold pans, gold panning, dry-blower, sluice box and actual alluvial gold and nuggets

FIELD TRIP NOTICE & BAR-B-Q

Sun 20 Nov 10am Scarborough Point Picnic area at Jamieson Park.

Bring your own food and drinks for either a picnic or Bar-B-Q lunch.

We will be fossicking on the spit for Chalcedony, Carnelian and Shells.

A fun day out for the whole family, especially the kids.

Put your name on the Field Trip Notice at the clubhouse, if you are attending.

Garry Gatfield

Field Trip Officer

XMAS Breakup Lunch

So that members can complete their busy Xmas party itineraries, we have set December 4 as the date for our Xmas lunch. We will definitely be having the popular auction so if you have any surplus lapidary/jewellery/rocks/fossicking equipment please donate to the club for the auction.

Gem Show -2012 Theme

Shapes and Colours of Quartz has been decided as the theme for next year's gem show. This is in keeping with the large amount of quartz crystals that have arrived back from Wave Hill with the field trippers. Hoping to see some fabulous display cases.

Planning for the show has already commenced with the flyers being currently printed. If anyone is available to help hand out flyers and outdoor stall contracts at Beenleigh gem show on October 1 please contact Ray Wilson.

NBLC SHOW FACET COMPETITION

The competition forms and diagrams are available at the club and can also be downloaded online at <http://www.nblc.com.au/gem%20show.htm>

OBSERVATION CAR RALLY 6TH NOVEMBER

A list is on the noticeboard for members to add their name if intending to attend this event. Family members are also welcome.

The rally will commence at 10AM from NBLC Clubrooms and last approximately 2 hours. There will be no fossicking along the way. Lunch will be provided at the destination.

The organiser (Sandra Bell) has been a little shy about giving away too many details, but I did elicit that attendees should wear footwear. There may be prickles apparently. There are no strenuous activities of climbing running or jumping and the rally is suitable for all.

The rally will complete mid afternoon, at which point members are free to find their own way home.

Lost from the Workshop.

A jump ring mandrel is missing from the jump ring making kit. This has been missing for several weeks. It would be appreciated if all members who use this equipment could check their tool boxes to see if the lost mandrel has been misplaced.

Electroplating Trial Go Ahead.

Following Peter Stringfellow's interesting electroplating demonstration at Rocktober, it has been decided that the club will purchase a kit. In the short term Graham Kinsela and Garry Gatfield will set up the equipment and run some tests. Once they have established the equipment and have a handle on the process members will be advised when we will hold plating work session and the likely cost structures.

Ring Setting Workshop.

Sandra Jeavons will conduct a ring setting workshop on November 12. The cost to members will be \$10. The starting time is a very sociable 10AM. Bring your cast items or hand made claw or bezel settings and Sandra will provide advice and assistance in setting your stones. Please add your name to the list at the club.

Upcoming Events			
Date	Event	Where	Comments
Oct-28	Lost Wax Casting	NBLC Club 7PM - 9.30PM	Limited to 10 members. \$15 per member.
Nov-06	Observation Car rally	Commence at NBLC Club	\$10 per member including lunch
Nov-12	Ring Setting	NBLC Club Rooms 10AM - 4PM	Sandra Jeavons will assist members to set either claw settings or rubbed over settings
Nov-28	Lost Wax Casting	NBLC Club 7PM - 9.30PM	Limited to 10 members. \$15 per member.
Dec-04	NBLC Xmas Party	NBLC Club Rooms	Details still to come.
Feb-18	"Natural Facet Rough" Buying to dopping	NBLC Club Rooms	Jim Jeavons has proposed this 1 day workshop.
Mar-4	NBLC Gem Show	Aviation High	Assistance required in setting up from 2PM on Friday at NBLC

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK.

By the time most of you read this I will be in Bangkok with Ross Chapman and his Gems of Aus tour. The threatening floods have not caused any major change of plans and although the papers have been full of dire warnings it seems that although quite nasty they aren't quite as bad as the reporters would have you believe. We here in Queensland can easily understand the anguish being suffered by those affected by the floods and our thoughts are definitely with them.

Congratulations and thanks to all who helped with ROCKTOBER and particularly RAY WILSON our secretary who, as usual, put his 110+% effort into the organization of the day. It seems to have been a resounding success.

See you all in a few weeks..

Peter Moller

peter.moller3@bigpond.com

TURQUOISE – THE STONE OF AGES.

(also called the Sky Stone)

By Ray Wilson

Source: The majority of this article is collated from several articles in Art Jewelry magazine December 2005.

**Further reading: *Indian Jewelry Making* (Volumes 1 and 2) by Oscar T Branson – in NBLC library.
Turquoise Unearthed by Joe Dan Lowry – ISBN -1-887896-33-3**

Turquoise is one of the oldest-known gem materials, and was mined in the Sinai Peninsula before the 4th millennium B.C. Its allure caught the eye of ancient Egyptians, Mayans, and Aztecs, who took to mining the gemstone. In ancient Mexico, turquoise was reserved for the gods and not worn by mere mortals. Apache Indians believed turquoise gave warriors and hunters better aim; the Zuni believed it protected them from demons; and Tibetans have carved it into ritual objects and worn it as traditional jewellery.

Turquoise had the honour of being part of the famous Breastplate of the Hebrew High Priest Aaron, an artifact synonymous with the glory and the mystique of the Holy Grail. Highly considered by Tibetans and Asians as a powerful stone to protect against evil, turquoise was also thought to bring prosperity into the wearer's life. As a birthstone for December, which carries the zodiac sign Sagittarius, how interesting that Roman and ancient European cultures linked turquoise with horses; turquoise supposedly would protect the wearer from falling from horses, and arrows tipped with turquoise would always hit their mark.

This stone was so highly valued that all 79 of the emeralds in the crown that Napoleon I gave his consort Empress Marie Louise were replaced with Persian turquoise cabochons. Throughout the centuries, the intense sky-blue Iranian turquoise, known as "Persian turquoise," has been the most sought after. This is a clear, even blue color with no evidence of green, nor any signs of black veins. As recently as the '70s, top-quality turquoise was fetching prices of \$2,000 for a 15x20mm piece. Prices will probably never reach such highs again due to scandalous misrepresentation of the stone over the years

Today much of the world's turquoise comes from China with southwest United States – Arizona and New Mexico – becoming a decreasing source. Turquoise from China tends to be more green than the prized blue, being influenced by iron in proximity to the copper minerals. Peru, Chile and Mexico also have commercial deposits but it is generally of softer poorer quality requiring stabilising before being used in lapidary. Today the term "Persian turquoise" is interpreted more as a description of colour quality than an indication of source. Other high colour quality terms are "robin's egg blue" or "sky blue"; in fact, the bluer the colour, the higher the value.

As with the majority of coloured stones, transparent and opaque alike, most turquoise undergoes various enhancement processes, often to stabilize the material. Some methods are accepted, others are seen as deceptive. All are common practices to improve lower-quality stones.

Coloured plastic impregnation is used to turn nearly white, porous stones blue and improve durability. Wax impregnation seals the pores and deepens the colour. Dyeing with black liquid shoe polish is used to imitate matrix. Backing thin pieces with epoxy adds thickness and weight. Cavities are filled with an epoxy mixed with tiny pieces of yellow metal to imitate pyrite inclusions. Surfaces are coated with lacquer to add colour or disguise dyes. All treatments can be detected under magnification, with an acetone swab, or by holding a hot electric needle close to the stone, causing the enhancement to sweat to the surface of the stone. Touching a plastic-impregnated stone with a hot point will give off an acrid smell.

Of all the natural substitutes, there are a few common culprits. To distinguish between these and natural turquoise, it is always good to know a bit of gemmology. "Gem chrysocolla" is actually a part of the chalcedony group of stones, in which the mineral chrysocolla is finely disseminated, giving the chalcedony an intense medium blue green color. However, the refractive index (RI) of chalcedony is 1.53 to 1.54, much lower than that of turquoise at 1.61 to 1.65. You can test the RI with a refractometer to find out whether it's chalcedony or turquoise. Whether it's chrysocolla masquerading as turquoise or the other way around will depend on which is of higher value — at the moment, you're more likely to see turquoise dressed up as the more valuable chrysocolla.

Amazonite also resembles turquoise and is light green to greenish blue in colour with a distinctive mottling and gridlike pattern not seen in turquoise. It also has a refractive index of 1.52 to 1.53, much lower than that of turquoise, and shows an uneven or splintery fracture as opposed to the conchoidal or granular fracture of turquoise.

Variscite often has a veined or mottled appearance with a yellowish-brown matrix, a close enough resemblance to have earned the misnomers of Nevada or Californian "turquoise." However, its refractive reading of 1.56 to 1.59 is much lower than that of turquoise and it will appear pinkish when viewed through a colour filter, whereas turquoise shows no colour change through a filter. Variscite's color should be a deterrent in itself, as it resembles that of only poor-quality turquoise.

Howlite is a naturally opaque white stone with a dark, spiderweb matrix appearance, similar to that of turquoise and therefore commonly dyed to imitate the more expensive stone. A quick and easy test to separate the two is a colour filter; viewed through a filter, dyed howlite will appear pink or red. Howlite also has the lower refractive index of 1.58 to 1.60 to that of turquoise. As a third test, albeit a destructive one, a drop of hydrochloric acid on an obscure spot on dyed howlite will attack the stone and leave a distinct dull spot.

Synthetic turquoise is virtually identical to natural turquoise but will show artificial-looking matrix as well as a distinctive darker blue, spotty appearance on a lighter background, visible under 30 to 50x magnification. This appearance is better known as the "cream of wheat" effect and is a dead give-away.

Glass imitations will show a vitreous lustre on small fractures as opposed to the waxy luster of the natural stone. Glass and plastic imitations will show signs of tiny bubbles under magnification. Touching plastic imitation turquoise with a hot point will melt the surface and emit an acrid odour.

Another practice, one that can trace its origins back to 2000 B.C., is that of reconstituted turquoise. Known as faience during the Egyptian period, the material consisted of a quartz paste that was shaped, glazed, and fired to resemble sky-blue turquoise. Today, reconstituted turquoise consists of pulverized turquoise rock, mixed with resin and injected into a mould to form a solid brick, which is then shaped. Pulverized pyrite is sometimes added to better imitate natural turquoise.

Due to its natural porosity, natural turquoise, if neglected, can change colour to such an extent that it can sometimes be mistaken for green jade. It is therefore essential to take good care of turquoise. Natural turquoise is one of the most valuable non-transparent minerals in the jewellery trade. It deserves all the tender loving care it can get.

Never clean turquoise in an ultrasonic or a steam cleaner. Avoid exposing it to heat or chemicals and remember, blue turquoise is known to turn green after prolonged exposure to perspiration, soap, skin oils, hand lotion, and cosmetics.

Never has the term caveat emptor (buyer beware) been more relevant than when purchasing turquoise, but every lapidary should seek out some turquoise to cut and set. It is a beautifully coloured stone, it doesn't have too many problems when working and the hardness varies from 5.0 for poor quality porous material to 7.0 for gem grade material – R.W.

POLISHING ZEBRA ROCK

There has been some members recently working Zebra Stone and some questions arose about getting a finish on this stone.

Peter Smith provided the following info sourced from the Zebra Rock Gallery at Kununurra.

Sanding: first use 600 grade wet & dry sandpaper. Then finish with 1200 grade wet & dry sandpaper until all of the scratches have been removed and the article becomes smooth.

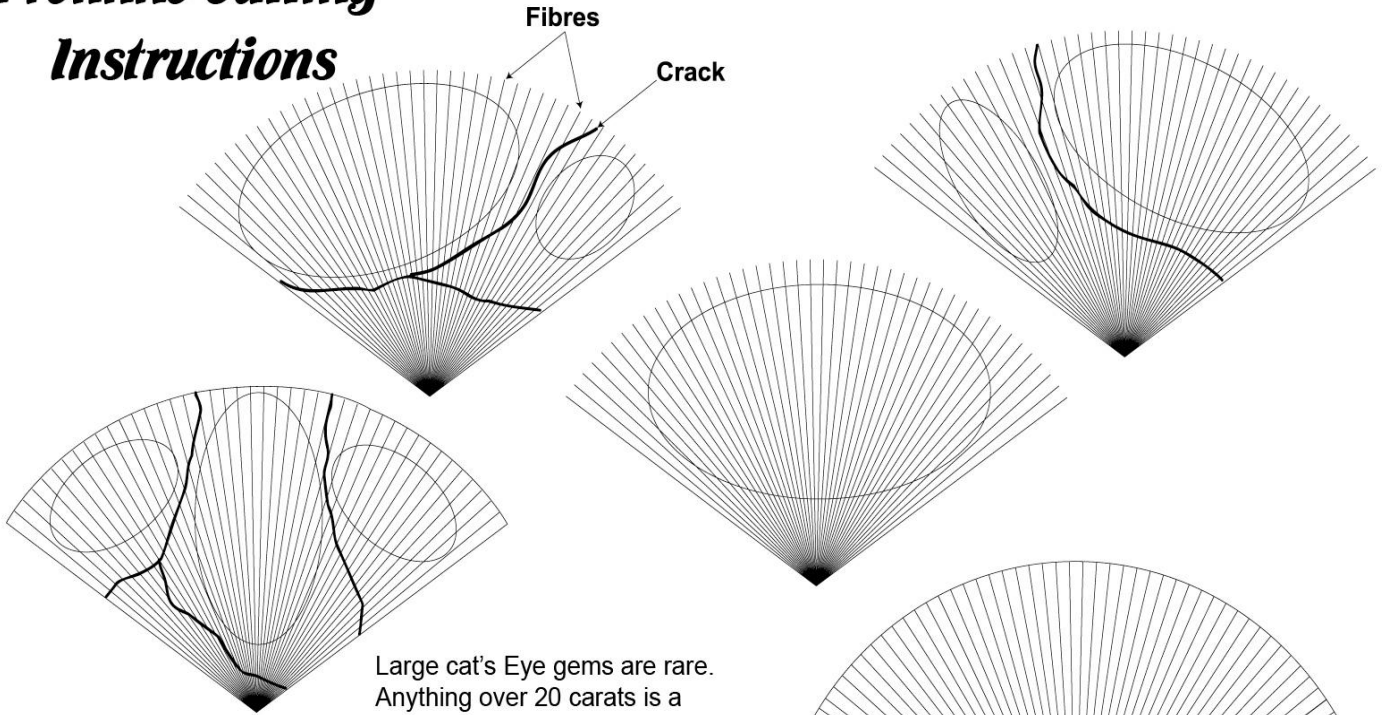
Washing: Wash well with soapy water to remove sludge. Rinse well, leave to dry. Take care around any feature details such as the eyes in carved work.

Polishing: To enhance the natural colours of your rock you can use a vinyl floor polish such as Armstrong's Shinekeeper or Johnson's One Go (available from supermarkets). Simply rub on with a lint free cloth and rub off. The more coats applied (recommend 5 coats or more) the shinier the finish.

These difficulties in polishing Zebra Rock to a high lustre are due entirely to the rock material. Zebra Rock is unique to the Kimberleys in north Western Australia and is comprised of silica and silt or clay. The red layers are coloured by iron

oxide.

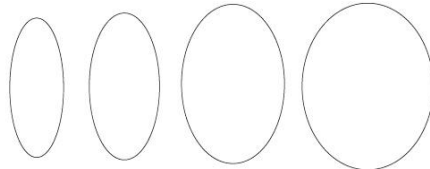
Prehnite Cutting Instructions



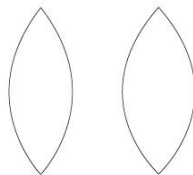
Large cat's Eye gems are rare. Anything over 20 carats is a very large gem.

The diagrams on this page show the radial nature of crystalline prehnite. Lines could be cracks or twinning and it is best to try to avoid including these in the finished gem. Flaw-free gems will be higher value. Double-sided cabs give a more vivid effect. Care should be taken in preparing the gem. Do not hit with a hammer!

- 4 x 6 mm
- 5 x 7 mm
- 6 x 8 mm
- 7 x 9 mm
- 8 x 10 mm
- 9 x 11 mm
- 10 x 12 mm
- 10 x 14 mm
- 12 x 16 mm
- 13 x 18 mm



These shapes are OK



Navettes - These shapes are also OK

Rounds

- 5 mm
- 6 mm
- 7 mm
- 8 mm
- 9 mm
- 10 mm
- 11 mm
- 12 mm
- 13 mm
- 14 mm
- 15 mm
- 16 mm

