



LAPIS

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"SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE"

VOLUME FORTY ONE NUMBER FIVE FEBRUARY 2007

CLUB NEWS

The next General meeting will be on Tuesday Evening 13 February 2007. The meeting will be followed by a talk on growing orchids successfully by Jean Deane and the lucky door prize for the evening will be orchids.

New Members

We would like to welcome our newest members –

- Imogen Halvey – Hornsby Heights (Junior)

We wish Imogen many long hours of enjoyment cutting gemstones.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Oh! Isn't it hard to get back into the groove! I hope you all enjoyed your Christmas and New Year break as much as I did. It was actually a good opportunity for me to find the time to get back into some faceting – something that I have neglected for quite a few years.

This year, without the Exhibition, should be a little less hectic which should provide an opportunity to look at doing some other things for the Club. Last year's program to recognize those Members who have achieved 10, 20, 30 and even 40 year's memberships was well received and it was pleasing to see so many people at the Club Christmas Party to accept their mementos. For those who were not able to accept them in person, their Mementos will be posted or delivered in the coming weeks.

This year the Committee is looking at ways to recognize the enormous contribution that our class

teachers have made (and of course continue to make) to the success and life of the Club. It is a critical role that is certainly worthy of some form of recognition. A number of ideas are under discussion and we will let you know as things progress. (If you have any thoughts or suggestions on what form this acknowledgement should take then please contact one of the Committee.)

Thanks and good luck to all those who have prepared entries for the competition at the Gatton GEMBOREE.

Back on her feet (almost) ...Our Lapis Editor (Barbara) has had some surgery on her knee. All went well but she will have to limp around for a while until fully recovered. Best wishes from all.

Brian Burns

Christmas Party – Saturday 9th December 2006

The Club Christmas Party was once again held outside on the Village Green at Beecroft, followed by a Tombola in the Club Rooms. The weather was kind and allowed us to have an enjoyable picnic outside; even it did get a little cool later in the afternoon.

Although numbers were down on previous years Santa Clause came much to the delight of the children – thank you Santa.

Thanks should also go to Bert Deane who was once again in charge of the BBQ and ensured that the very thick steaks and sausages were cooked to perfection.

A number of plaques and certificates were also awarded to people who had been financial members for 10, 20, 30 and 40 years – the latter

going to Alice Oxley who has now reached the marvelous age 102.

Taffy Evans and Harry Lovell won the great big Christmas Hampers.

I have received a telephone call from Agnes Evans asking that I publicly thank those people who assisted them in a number of ways at the Club Christmas Party. It was greatly appreciated. It is good to see the Christmas spirit is alive and well amongst our members.

Editor

Nundle “Escape”

It has been traditional for a number of years now, to have a trip to Nundle after the exhibition. I would like to thank Bruce Macleay and Bert Deane for organising what was obviously a successful social weekend. I was also pleased to hear that John “A” made the journey both ways without any problems this time.

Tony Try
Field Trip Officer

Thank You

I would like to thank Peter Merry for taking on the role of Editor of Lapis while I was away. It is not an easy job to slot into for a few months, and I do appreciate the effort. It allowed me to have a trip that was otherwise not possible, so a very sincere “Thank You”.

Barbara Try
Editor

GEMKHANA 2006 - NDLC SUCCESSES

Section 1A – Standard Cabochon - Open

3rd Anthony Rigg 99.77

H.C. Jean Macleay 99.40

Section 1B – Fancy Cabochon C/S- Open

1st Anthony Rigg 100.00

Section 2A – Dble Std Cabochon – Open

1st Anthony Rigg 97.25

Section 12A Tumbled Stones – Preformed – Open

3rd Jean Macleay 93.07

Congratulations to both Jean and Tony for their efforts and pleasing results.

I am also pleased to advise that for the second year the Northern Districts Lapidary Club was awarded the trophy for the Most Successful Magazine.

Thank you to all the members who contributed articles for Lapis.

Editor

Club’s History



Our special thanks go out to Jean Macleay for her compilation and update of our Club’s history. The earlier parts of the history were written by Ann Macdougall, Joy Bowman and Sonja Schock and Jean has now spent many months delving through the Club archives and bringing it all up to date. Jean has also included many photos of Club activities - both old and new - which add a whole new dimension and interest to the history. The end result is a fabulous memento – thanks Jean!

The history, by its very nature, contains information, stories and now photos involving many members. Most of this information has been obtained from Club Minutes and Lapis articles and so in that sense has already been ‘published’. However, if any Members do NOT wish their names or other information to appear in the new Club’s history then they should submit their request in writing to the Club Secretary by 1st March 2007.

For those who wish to obtain a copy we hope to have more details on availability and cost in the next Lapis.

Brian Burns

Condolences

On behalf of all his friends at the Club we would like to express our sincere condolences to Mark Young, his son Glenn, and all family members, on the recent passing of Mark’s wife Rosalie.

We have also received news of another old member who has recently passed away. Ray Fry joined the Club in the late 1960's and both Marj and Ray were very active members. They were both committee members for a number of years and took part in most club functions. In recent years however, they could only attend our Exhibitions.

On behalf of all their friends at the Club we would like to express our sincere condolences to Marj and her family on the recent passing of Ray.

GEMBOREE 2007 at Gatton QLD

“The Gatton Gang”



As promised the itinerary for the trip to Gatton and beyond is now ready

We plan to visit Girraween and Queen Mary Falls National Parks before going to the GEMBOREE at Gatton. We will then look for Petrified Wood in the Miles/Chinchilla area: Roma cattle yards (Cattle sales?): Canarvon Gorge: Springsure for Labradorite and Opalised Wood: the Willows fields for Sapphire: Cania Gorge and Bunya Mountain.

It is estimated that the total trip time will take five weeks. Copies of the detailed itinerary are now on the notice board at the Club.

If any member can not get to the Club rooms and would like a copy emailed to them please contact me and I will arrange for one to be sent.

Again I would like to remind members they can join us on this trip and be part of the GEMBOREE and have some fun fossicking. ***You do not have to do the whole trip but choose the bits you would like to be part of.***

We will be meeting at Tenterfield on Saturday 31 March 2007 to commence the trip on Sunday 1 April 2007.

So far, eleven Club members have registered and will be making the trip north to Gatton for the GEMBOREE at Easter.

Tony Try

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From the Committee

- **Opal Saw**

The opal saw blades are **very thin and easily damaged** if not handled with considerable care. Following the history of mistreatment and damage to the saw the Committee has decided to restrict its use unless under adequate supervision. In the near future, a lock will be installed on the saw and it will be up to the class teacher to provide access to the saw and the required level of supervision for its use (key to be kept in normal Key Cabinet in the foyer).

- **Remember:**

*The Opal Saw is for normal 'soft' **opal only**. Hard silicified nodules like Yowah Nuts or Boulder Opal are **NOT** to be cut on this saw – use the small slab saws instead. If in doubt, check with the teacher first!*

- **Cutting Room**

New drive belts have been fitted to some of the saws and the tumbler has been repaired. A new 8" Nova wheel has been purchased to replace the worn 1200 grit. The Nova's have proved very popular and provide a great pre-polish finish. The Club is currently investigating the feasibility and cost of installing two smaller diameter (4"-6") Novas which would be more suited for working with tighter inside curves on fancy cabs and free-forms.

- **When Joining the Club –**

There has been a long-standing tradition in the Club that new members who join the Club should begin in one of the cabochon classes to 'learn the ropes' of good lapidary namely – care, cleanliness, patience and a desire to do the best that you can – before moving to the other classes such as faceting or jewellery. This has worked well in providing newcomers with a good introduction to the safe handling of the various machines as well as the overall operation of the Club. The Committee discussed the matter at some length and has agreed that people joining the Club should attend at least two terms of cabochon cutting before being eligible to join one of the other classes.

Update from Home

A Collage of Memories by a member of the "Happy Foursome"

I am pleased to say that we made it back in time for the Club's Christmas Party, which was always our intention.

A few people have asked me to say what I thought was the highlight of our 3 ½ months trip, which was predominately to Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

First of all let me say that we could quite easily have spent twice that time without being bored. There is so much to see and experience.

However I believe that John Weatherburn gave the best answer when he said that there were many different things that were memorable, and not necessarily better than any other. With that in mind I believe the following - in no particular order of importance and by no means the only points of interest - are immediate memories that come to mind:-

1. Because it was late in the season it was very warm and often with high humidity. In addition, the free camping areas were very dry and largely without any shade. We therefore chose to stay in caravan parks where a variety of amenities made life more pleasant. However, our sites always seemed to be closer to the Ladies amenities than the Mens – maybe this had something to do with the fact that Barbara and Gina always did the bookings and paperwork etc.
2. We had been warned about mosquitoes, sand-flies and midgies, and while there were a few in some places, we did not encounter enough to be a problem, and were able to sit outside most afternoons' to enjoy "Happy Hours" and BBQ evening meals. They were extremely pleasant ends to each day.
3. We saw a wide variety of bird life and took over 400 photos of wild flowers.

The morning cruise on Yellow Waters at Kakadu was excellent - particularly for bird and animal life. Watching two young jabiru making a mess of their first flying / landing efforts, and sea eagles feeding their young was an experience of a lifetime.

4. 80 Mile Beach was very peaceful and the fishing off the beach was unreal!! Everyone fished the afternoon incoming tide. Barbara and Gina caught large Threadfin Salmon, which were filleted and cooked the same evening. Beautiful!!!!
5. The drive out to the Bungle Bungle Range, followed by a walk into the Cathedral Gorge, and then a helicopter flight over them was very impressive. The beehive shapes were quite eerie.
6. Watching Stromatolites (the oldest form of life on earth) breathing (blowing bubbles) in the salty water also made one think about time, life and evolution.
7. Watching sunsets and camels on Cable Beach at Broome seemed to make the "bubbly" taste better. We watched several sunsets just to make sure it did the same thing each time. (It did!!!!)
8. The deep and vivid reds of the rocks and soils of the Kimberley and Pilbara regions contrasting with the stark ghost and white gums is something that has to be seen to be believed.
9. When driving through the Pinnacles in the late afternoon it is easy to see how early seafarers thought they were the ruins of ancient cities. The thousands of obelisks of various shapes and sizes, protruding from the desert sands conjured up all sorts of imaginative pictures and possibilities.
10. The startling white beaches and turquoise blue waters of the coastline around Esperance was very real, picture postcard country. Probably the

most beautiful piece of coastline I have ever seen.

11. It was my first time to cross the Nullabor and it was anything but boring. The scenery changed constantly and the many lookouts to see the massive cliffs, which dropped straight down into the swirling waters of the Great Australian Bight were very impressive. As Barbara said – “one could literally fall off Australia along that section of coastline”.
12. Good friends / company for the whole trip made it very enjoyable.

To finish this very abbreviated comment on our trip I would like to try and “draw” a word picture of an incident I saw while we were at Albany, which will probably have more meaning to those that have pulled a caravan.

Picture a husband and wife team that have just arrived in the caravan park. They have successfully parked the van and unhooked the car. It is hot, so both are wearing shorts and hubby has removed his shirt and singlet as they proceed to level the van. Hubby is on one knee winding down a leg of the caravan. The wife (as is normal) is standing by watching, when she removes one of her sneakers and commences to repeatedly hit hubby about the back and legs. A distraught male voice (hubby's) comes clearly on the breeze – “for God sake hit harder”!!!!

The wife then takes to the belting with gusto and loud smacking noises were very soon quite audible.

It appears that some March flies were biting defenceless hubby and the “other half” was initially too tentative in her hitting of them.

Tony Try

One of the “Happy Foursome”

A note from the editor – both the ladies that were part of the “Happy Foursome” did not stand around doing nothing. They had their own things to do with getting the van ready for occupancy.

~

An Introduction to Fossils

As long ago as six centuries before the birth of Christ, the Greeks had a rudimentary knowledge of what fossils were and what information might be gained from them.

Nearly two and a half thousand years later, however, eighteenth century men of science were arguing about the `true' meaning of these strange rock-like shapes. The Greeks had concluded that fossil shells found buried far inland indicated that the sea had once been there. Later scholars decided that pilgrims returning from holy shrines had dropped the shells on mountain tops, or that they had grown in the ground from `germs' fallen from the stars. No distinction was made between what today we term fossils and such things as rock crystals, buried artifacts or any rock resembling a living organism. In the sixteenth century a German physician coined the term `fossil' (derived from the Latin word 'fossilis' meaning `dug up').

It is only in recent times however that the great significance of the fossil is truly appreciated. By comparing a specimen with others found in the rock layers above and below, we can see how the different life forms evolved. With the aid of modern science, fossils can reveal much about the climate and the appearance of life on earth before man's short written history.

For countless millions of years the surface of the earth was too hot to support life. With time, however, sufficient cooling took place for water vapours to condense and collect in depressions. These waters accumulated quantities of minerals which had dissolved out of the solidified igneous rocks.

As time passed the molecules of the elements of these various minerals grouped, then parted, regrouped and divided. This probably happened an incalculable number of times before, by chance, a combination of molecules formed what was the first one-celled organism representing 'life' as we understand it. This first living cell may have survived immediately, or may have succumbed to cold, heat or any number of hostile conditions. If it did not immediately survive, many more years may have passed before a number of the constantly reorganising molecules again fitted together to form `life'. Whatever the chain of events, certain organisms became established and flourished.

These first living things possessed the characteristics essential for continued existence; the ability to adapt to and draw sustenance from the environment and the ability to reproduce.

The first one-celled organisms were probably formed of a thin jellylike protoplasm, so minute and delicate that preservation in fossil form was impossible. Through the process known as evolution, these one-celled organisms developed, resulting in the more complex lifeforms which surround us today.

We are able to trace this development through the remains of plants and animals found in fossil form. But the preservation of a whole organism, just as it was at the time of death, is extremely rare.

This introduction was taken from Australian Fossils by Douglas M Stone and Sharman N Bawden.

Many other Fossil Books are available to read in our Library

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The Final Inspection

The soldier stood and faced God,
Which must always come to pass.
He hoped his shoes were shining,
Just as brightly as his brass.

'Step forward now, you soldier,
How shall I deal with you?
Have you always turned the other cheek?
To my church have you been true?'

The soldier squared his shoulders and said,
'No Lord, I guess I ain't.
Because those of us--who carry guns,
Can't always be a saint.

I've had to work most Sundays,
And at times my talk was tough.
And sometimes I've been violent,
Because the world is awfully rough.

But I never took a penny,
That wasn't mine to keep.
Though I worked a lot of overtime
When the bills got just too steep.

And I never passed a cry for help,
Though at times I shook with fear
And sometimes God, forgive me,
I've wept unmanly tears.

I know I don't deserve a place,
Among the people here.
They never wanted me around,
Except to calm their fears.

If you've a place for me here, Lord,
It needn't be so grand.
I never expected or had too much,
But if you don't, I'll understand.'

There was a silence all around the throne,
Where the saints had often trod.
As the soldier waited quietly,
For the judgement of his God.

'Step forward now, you soldier,
You've borne your burdens well.
Walk peacefully on Heaven's streets,
You've done your time in hell.'

Editor – Received anon.



Funnies

Tell a man there are 400 billion stars and he will believe you. Tell him the seat has just been painted and he will have to touch it !!!

A modern Miss speaking to her friend:

“You know my life is like mathematics – I am trying to add to my income, subtract from my weight, divide my time and avoid multiplying!”

Just Some Thoughts on Getting Older

- The nice thing about being senile is you can hide your own Easter Eggs.
- Know how to prevent sagging? Just eat till the wrinkles fill out



DATES OF INTEREST

- Feb 13** NORTHERN DISTRICTS LAPIDARY CLUB
General Meeting Tuesday 8 pm, Clubrooms Beecroft all members welcome
- Feb 24** Annual Rock Auction – Central Coast Lapidary Club
7 Ourimbah Creek Road, Ourimbah NSW
- Mar 3-4** “Back from Tucson” Crystal Habit, Quality Gem Rough, Quality Alpaca Supplies
52 Macpherson Road, Londonderry NSW
- Mar 13** NORTHERN DISTRICTS LAPIDARY CLUB
General Meeting Tuesday 8 pm, Clubrooms Beecroft all members welcome
- Mar 24-25** Canberra Rockswap – Canberra Lapidary Club
Held at “EPIC” (outdoors)
- Mar 31** Gatton Gang – depart for the GEMBOREE
- July 11 – 14** Enamelling Workshop – By Barbara Minor from the USA. This 4 day workshop will be held at Lindfield with a cost of \$300. More information in the March Edition of Lapis

- 2007 – GEMBOREE – Queensland, Gatton – April 6-9**
2008 – GEMBOREE – SA, Murray Bridge – Mar 21 -24 -
2009 – GEMBOREE – Vic, Horsham – April 10-13
2010 – GEMBOREE – Tasmania
2011 – GEMBOREE - NSW

For information on Interstate and Overseas Gem Shows see back pages of the Gem & Lapidary News available in clubrooms on shelf near library.



Northern Districts Lapidary Club Shirts

Good quality polo shirts are available from the shop for field trips and future GEMBOREE'S.

They are royal blue with the Club's badge embroidered above the pocket on the left hand side of the shirt.
Cost is \$35.00. Sizes range from small to XXXL.

If your size is not available in the shop please complete the form below.

Please indicate the size and number you require. Name:.....

Size:.....Number:.....

Return to Secretary NDLC – PO Box 59, Beecroft NSW 2119

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